ロケットマン
MOTOHIRO KATO'S PRESENTS
A BOY MEETS
ROCKET MAN
IGNITION SEQUENCE START...
ROCKET MAN
加藤元浩

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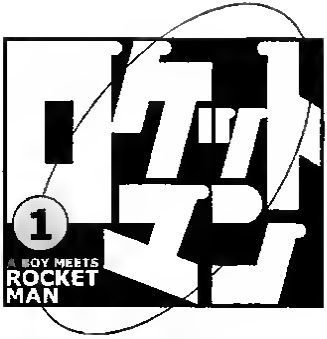
A BOY MEETS ROCKET MAN



加藤元浩

ROCKETMAN

by

Motohiro Katou
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Motohiro Katou
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Episode 1

R is for ROCKET

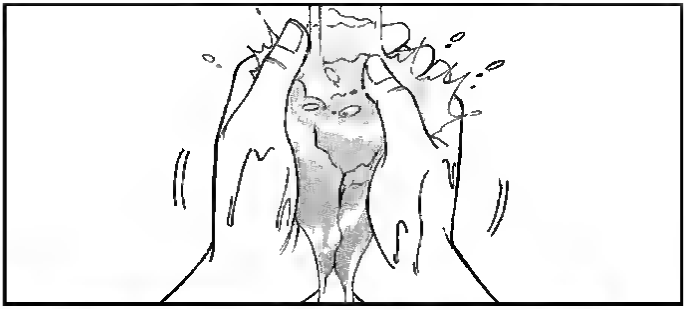
page3

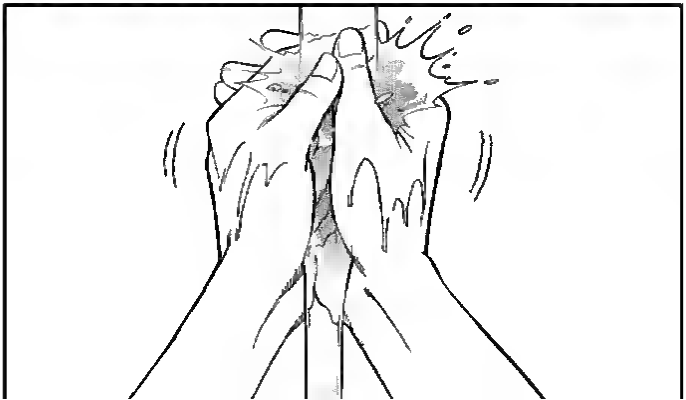
Episode 2

AGE OF THE PUSSYFOOT

page115

MY FIRST MEMORIES...



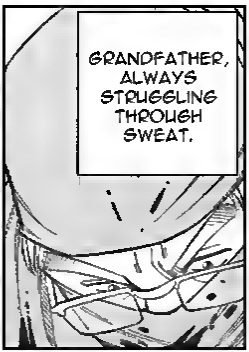


Episode 1
R is for ROCKET

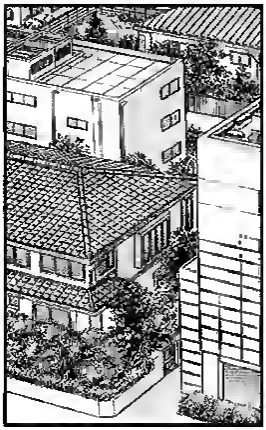
A CRUM-BLING HOUSE ..
YO!!
A WEATH-ERED DOOR
HURRY UP AND COME INSIDE, YO!!

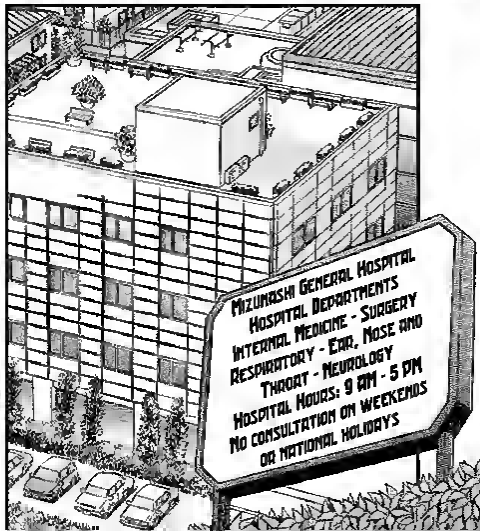
FWIP
CREAK
MY BLOOD-STAINED GRAND-FATHER.
WHERE CAN I HELP?
WHUP WHUP
THE SMELL OF MEDICINE AND THE CALLS OF BIRDS.
YO! HOLD HIM STEADY, OKAY!

HOWEVER, MY MEMORY IS CUT OFF HERE.



TOKYO,
2001

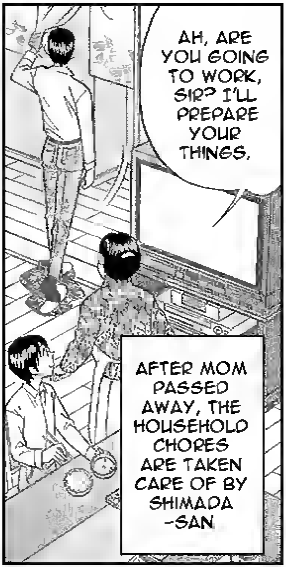


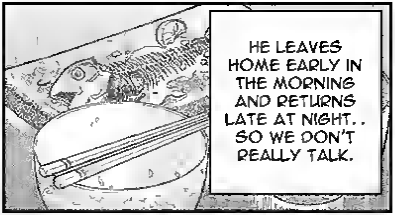

Mizumashi General Hospital
Hospital Departments
Internal Medicine - Surgery
Respiratory - Ear, Nose and
Throat - Neurology
Hospital Hours: 9 AM - 5 PM
No consultation on weekends
or national holidays

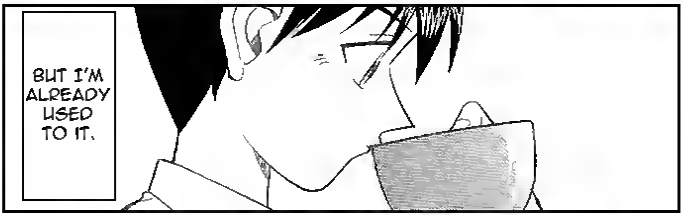
LATELY, I'VE BEEN WONDER-ING...
JUST A DREAM...?
ARE MY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES...
THIS CIVIL WAR IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE VIOLENT WITH EACH PASSING DAY.
IN A CERTAIN COUNTRY IN AFRICA, THE WAR BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT FORCES AND THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT GUERRILLA IS STILL CONTINUING .

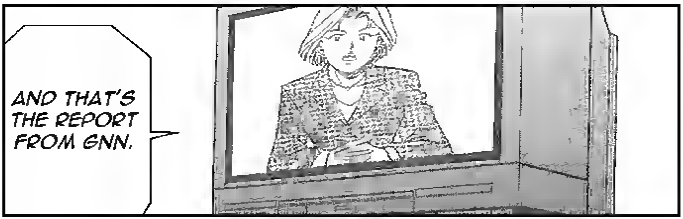
THE UN PROPOSED A PLAN TO CUT OFF THE FUNDING TO THE GUERRILLA FORCES.
OH, YO-KUN!
STANDS
IT'S OKAY, SHIMADA -SAN, I CAN DO IT MYSELF.
I'D HAVE PREPARED IT FOR YOU, IF YOU HAD ASKED ME.

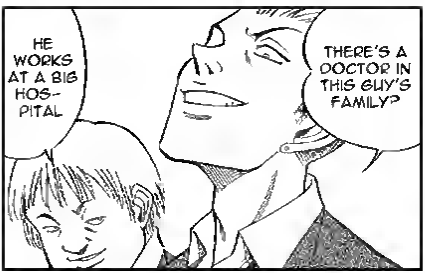
MY FATHER IS THE DIRECTOR AT A NEARBY HOSPITAL.

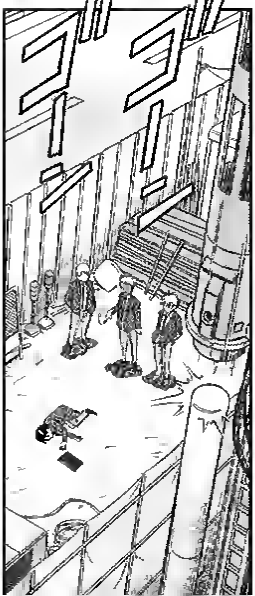

AH, ARE YOU GOING TO WORK, SIR? I'LL PREPARE YOUR THINGS.
AFTER MOM PASSED AWAY, THE HOUSEHOLD CHORES ARE TAKEN CARE OF BY SHIMADA -SAN.


HE LEAVES HOME EARLY IN THE MORNING AND RETURNS LATE AT NIGHT.. SO WE DON'T REALLY TALK.


BUT I'M ALREADY USED TO IT.

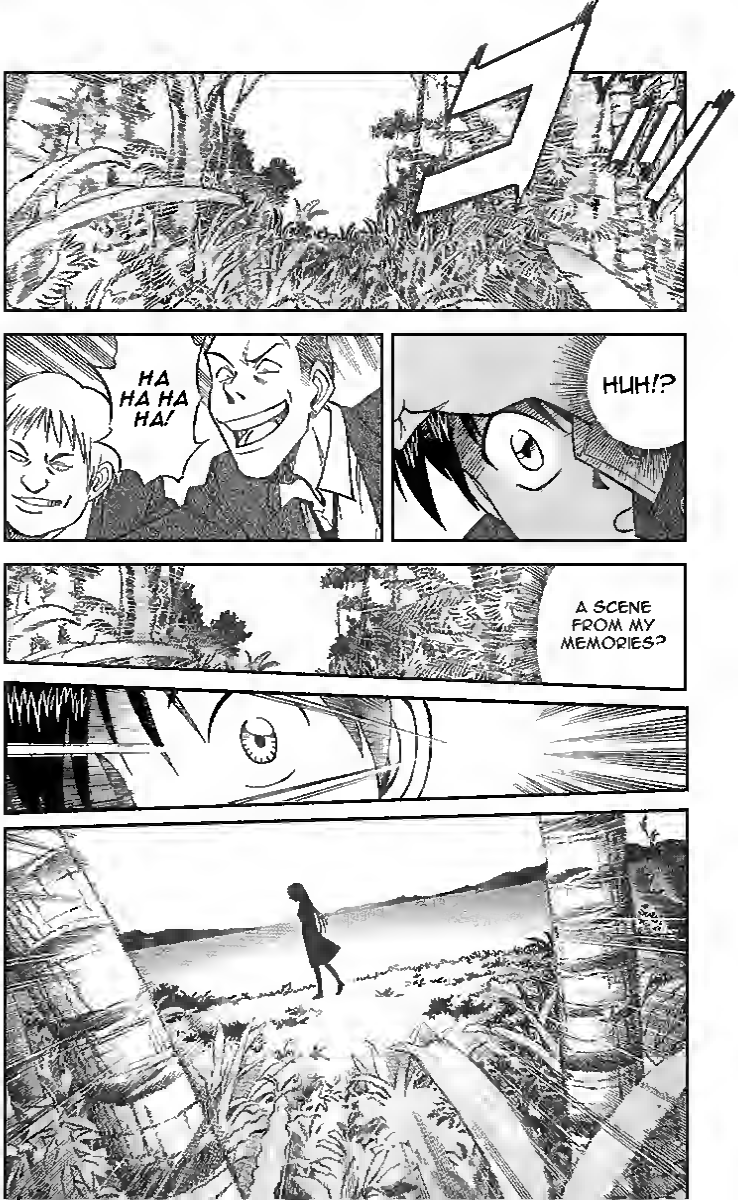

AND THAT'S THE REPORT FROM ENN.

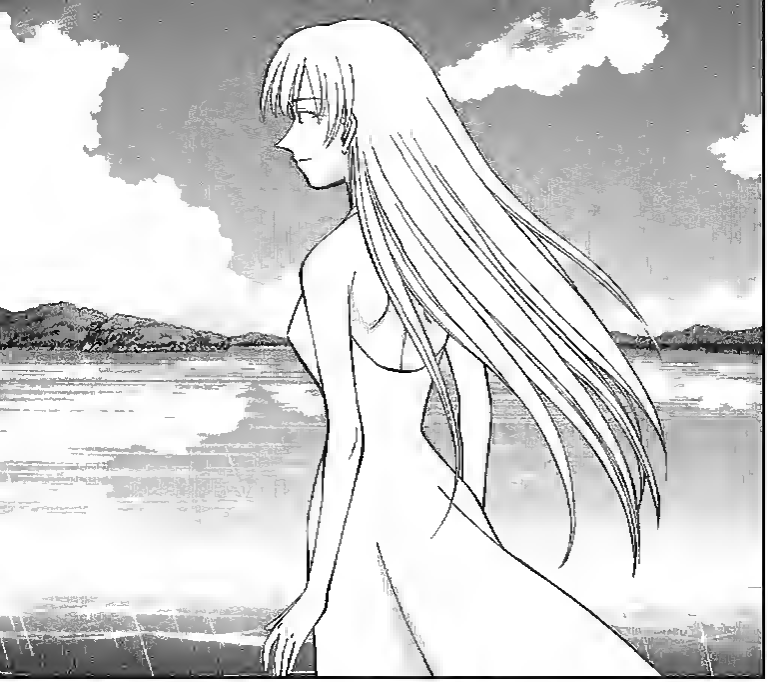

HE WORKS AT A BIG HOS-PITAL
THERE'S A DOCTOR IN THIS GUY'S FAMILY?


ゴロゴロ

SO YOU MUST HAVE A LOT OF SPENDING MONEY, RIIIGHT?

COME ON, GET YOUR MONEY OUT!
IF YOU GIVE US SOME OF IT, YOUR WALLET WILL BE LIGHTER AND YOU CAN MOVE AROUND EASIER.
I'LL BE HELPING OUT TO~O.
COME ON, LET'S FINISH HIM!!
WHAT'S WITH THAT GLARE?
!!


HA HA HA HA!
HUH!?
A SCENE FROM MY MEMORIES?

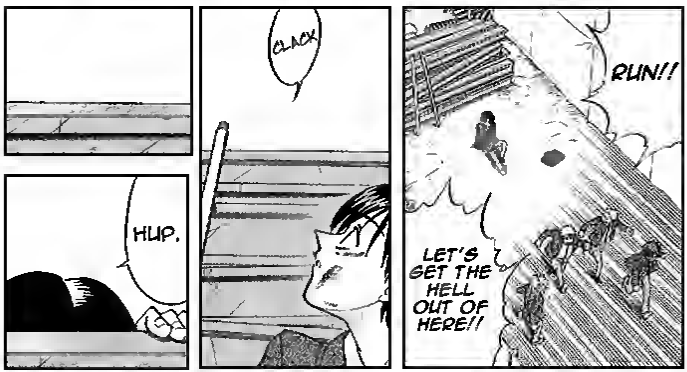


WHO IS SHE!?

POLICE-MAN! OVER HERE!!

DAMMIT! YOU LITTLE...

CRAP!
SOMEONE IS BEING BEATEN UP, HURRY, HURRY!


HUP.
CLACK
RUN!!
LET'S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!!

WAAH, YOU'RE ALL BEATEN UP!
HIYA!
ARE YOU OKAY, MIZUNASHI -KUN?

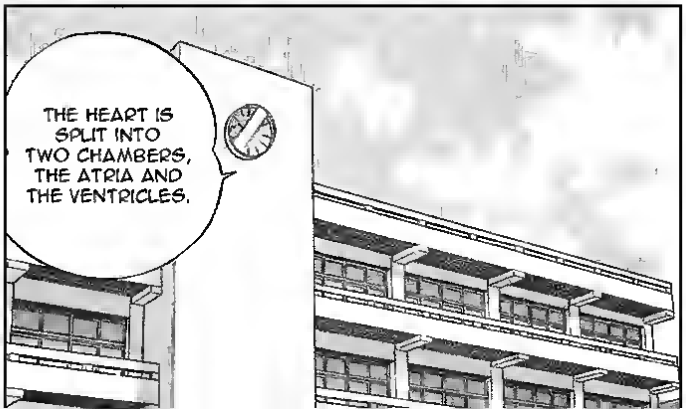
THANKS A LOT.
NO NEED TO THANK ME.
BUT, HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
EH!?

UM... EVEN THOUGH WE'RE IN THE SAME CLASS?
Are you serious?
HUH?

...

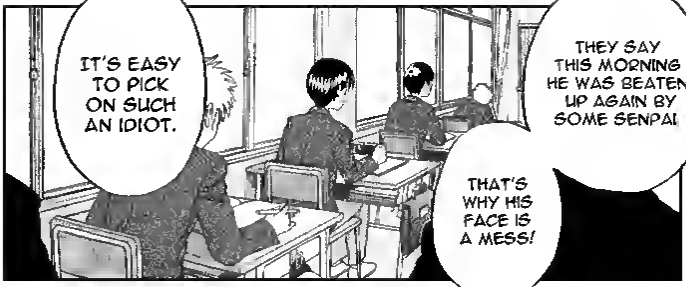
MY NAME IS NAGA-TSUKI YAYOI!!
DON'T YOU EVER FORGET THAT AGAIN!!

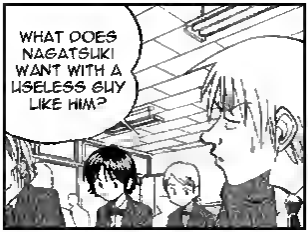
AH... NO, PLEASE GO AHEAD OF ME.
WHAT IS IT? HURRY, COME IN!
THANK GOODNESS, WE'RE NOT LATE YET!!
IF THEY SEE YOU WALKING WITH ME, YOU COULD LOSE YOUR FRIENDS.
SO, JUST HURRY UP AND GO, PLEASE


THE HEART IS SPLIT INTO TWO CHAMBERS, THE ATRIA AND THE VENTRICLES.

THE ATRIA AND VENTRICLES ARE FURTHER DIVIDED INTO LEFT AND RIGHT CHAMBERS.
THUS, A HUMAN HEART IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR CHAMBERS
ALL OF IT IS MADE UP OF VERY POWERFUL CARDIAC MUSCLE
WHO IS THIS ...?

Y... YES!
MIZU-NASHI!
TELL ME THE TWO TYPES OF BLOOD CIRCULATION IN HUMANS!
THAT'S ENOUGH!
THOSE ARE
THE PULMO-NARY AND SYSTEMIC CIRCULA-TIONS!
U... UM...
AS USUAL, HE'S AN IDIOT.
HMPH
Y... YES.
YOU'RE NOT LISTENING, ARE YOU?! SIT DOWN!


IT'S EASY TO PICK ON SUCH AN IDIOT.
THEY SAY THIS MORNING HE WAS BEATEN UP AGAIN BY SOME SENPAI
THAT'S WHY HIS FACE IS A MESS!


WHAT DOES NAGATSUKI WANT WITH A USELESS GUY LIKE HIM?

NO WAY!
YEAH! I HEARD THAT TOO.
AND I HEARD THIS MORNING HE WALKED TO SCHOOL WITH NAGATSUKI.

HEY, NAGA-TSUKI!

DID YOU WALK TO SCHOOL WITH MIZU-NASHI?

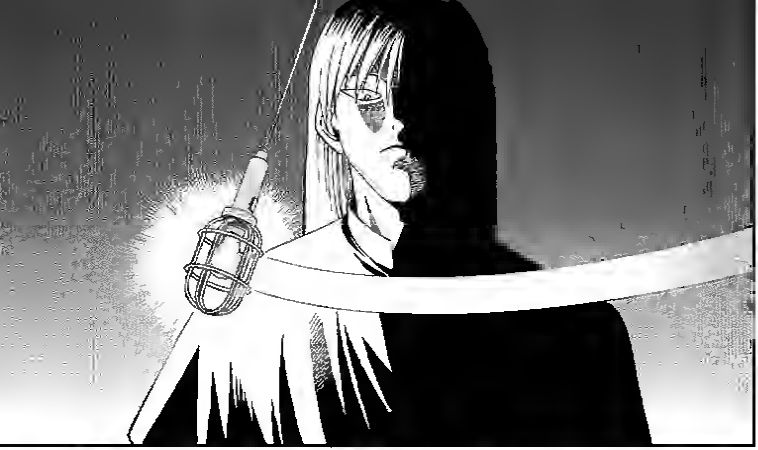
ME TOO!
I'D HAVE DEFINITELY HELPED THOSE SENPAI BEAT HIM UP!

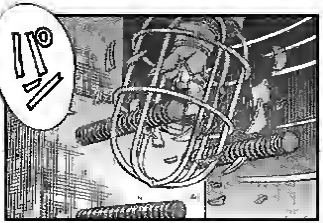
SO WHAT IF I DID?
DIDN'T YOU REJECT A SENPAI FROM THE SOCCER CLUB A WHILE AGO? AND HE WAS REALLY COOL.
AND LAST MONTH, DIDN'T TWO GUYS CONFESS TO YOU?
WHY WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO WALK WITH TRASH LIKE HIM?
IT'LL START BAD RUMORS!
WHAT'S WITH THAT?
YOU'D BETTER BE CAREFUL WITH YOUR FEELINGS.
HE IS ALWAYS BEING BULLIED AND BAD-MOUTHED.
BUT WHAT IS IT? EVEN BEFORE...
I'VE ALWAYS FELT LIKE HE'S IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PLACE.

IT'S JUST A DREAM, HUH..
I'VE BEEN IN THIS WORLD THE WHOLE TIME.
AND I'LL ALWAYS STAY HERE.
THE TWO OF THEM ARE DATING? ARE YOU FOR REAL?
DID YOU WATCH THE SHOW LAST NIGHT?
THAT SHOW WASN'T REALLY THAT GOOD.
IT LOOKS LIKE I NEED A PASSWORD TO GET INTO THAT DUNGEON.
DIDN'T YOU ASK ALL THE VILLAGERS!?

HERE COMES WALLET -CHAN FINALLY!
YOU'RE SLOW, TOO...

COME ON, TAKE RESPON-SIBILITY
BECAUSE YOU'RE LATE, WE COULDN'T GO TO THE GAME CENTER EARLIER
MAYBE WE HAVE TO PUNISH YOU SOME MORE?
THIS IS THE WORLD THAT I HAVE TO CONTINUE LIVING IN.
DROP THE UM-BRELLA!!

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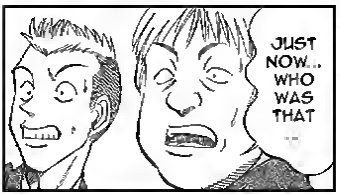
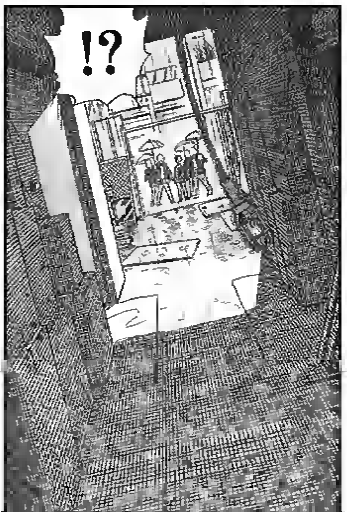

JUST NOW... WHO WAS THAT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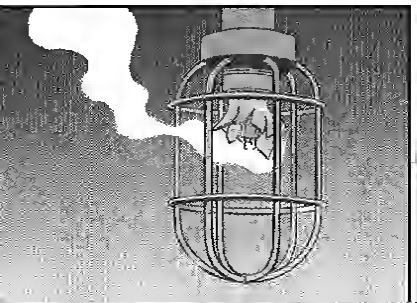

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AHHH!!
B... BLOOD!!
WOAH!

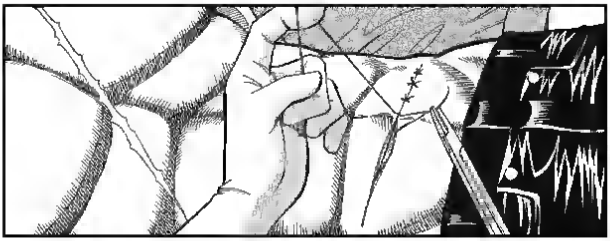
HUH?
H, HELP!
POLICE-MAN!!
ARE YOU OKAY? I'LL GET YOU AN AMBU-LANCE ...

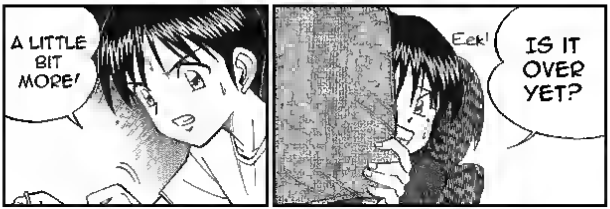
AN INJURED PERSON NEEDS TO GO HOME
SOMETHING LIKE CALLING AN AMBULANCE WOULD BE ANNOYING
RIGHT!
フラ…
THAT'S RIGHT
WHAT'S WITH HIM!?

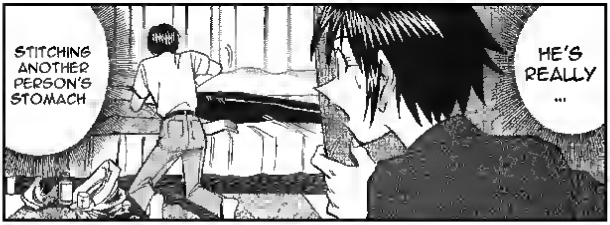
!?
スス
I'M BRINGING THIS GUY TO MY HOUSE
MIZUNASHI -KUN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

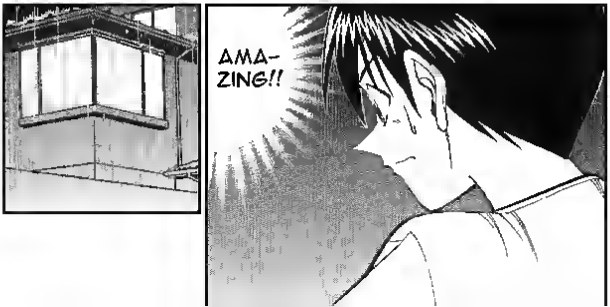
太好包帯
OH, MIZUNASHI -KUN!
CLICK

I DON'T KNOW, BUT THERE'S A LOT OF BLOOD...
HOW IS HE!?
THE BLEEDING IS SEVERE!!
THE WOUND IS SHALLOW, BUT...
HE MUST BE A YAKUZA OR SOMETHING!!
THAT AWFUL SCAR!!




A LITTLE BIT MORE!
Eek!
IS IT OVER YET?

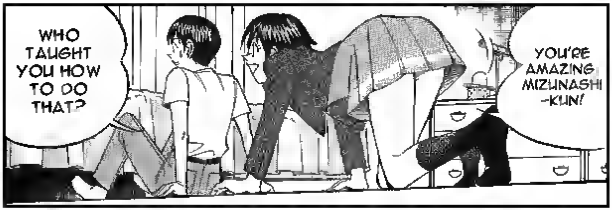

STITCHING ANOTHER PERSON'S STOMACH
HE'S REALLY ...


AMA-ZING!!

ARE YOU DONE!?

PHEW !!

YES ...
AND THE BLEEDING HAS STOPPED

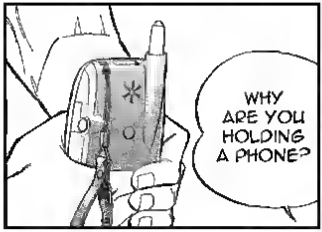

WHO TAUGHT YOU HOW TO DO THAT?
YOU'RE AMAZING MIZUNASHI-KUN!

I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER..
MY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES.

MY GRANDPA ...

I THINK ...

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?


WHY ARE YOU HOLDING A PHONE?

HE'S WAKING UP!

FWIP
SO I CAN CALL THE POLICE IF YOU.
WOAH!!
HE'S AS DANGE-ROUS AS I THOUGHT!
DO YOU THINK THEY CAN'T REPORT THIS?
THERE ARE PEOPLE DOWN-STAIRS!

HMM?
IDIOT! IDIOT!
.. I'D BE AFRAID...
IF IT WAS YOUR NECK ON THE LINE, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?
FOR EXAMPLE.. WITH YOUR LIFE!
AND TO FINALLY GET THEM, THEY MUST BE PAID FOR.
FACTS THAT AREN'T EASY TO FIND OUT... ARE VALUABLE...

DO YOU STILL WANT TO KNOW MY NAME?

THINK ABOUT IF YOU WANT ME TO CRUSH YOUR NECK LIKE THAT PHONE.

I I'M THE ONE WHO STITCHED YOUR WOUND!

He's gonna go after us next!
COME ON, STOP IT, MIZUNASHI -KUN!

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

MY NAME, HUH!
JUST CALL ME "R"!
IS THAT AN INITIAL FOR SOME-THING?
R !?
?
I DON'T WANT TO TALK TO PEOPLE WHO HAVEN'T EVEN READ BRADBURY.
SO YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT "R" IS AN INITIAL FOR?

HOW DID YOUR STOMACH GET CUT?
A THIEF!?
SOMETIMES THE TABLES TURN ON YOU.
IF YOU'RE CHASING A THIEF...
IT'S THIS MAN.

HIS NAME IS KIDENIA TOKIMA-RENCA.
ALL OVER THE WORLD!?
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR HIM ALL OVER THE WORLD.
I FOUND HIM HIDING IN JAPAN, BUT...
I FI-NALLY GOT HIM.

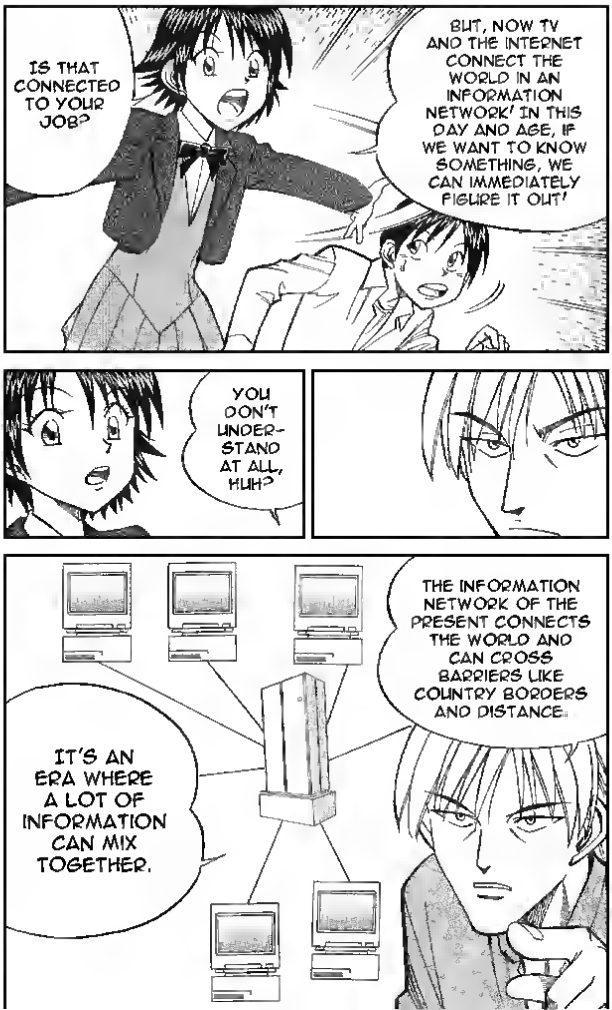
IT WAS LIKE I WAS TALKING TO MYSELF.
THAT BASTARD... HIS BLOOD WAS BOILING...
HA!
.....
BUT HIS BLADE WAS LONGER THAN I THOUGHT.
I THOUGHT THAT I'D DODGED HIM THAT TIME...

IT'S A "BLACK DIAMOND."
WHAT DID HE STEAL?
IF YOU'RE CHASING HIM AROUND THE WORLD, IS IT SOMETHING REALLY AMAZING?
"BLACK DIAMOND"!?
IDIOT! IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!!
HE MUST BE A FOOD THIEF!
THE CLIENT TOLD ME ABOUT IT.
OH! I KNOW! THOSE ARE EXPENSIVE FOODS LIKE CAVIAR OR TRUFFLES, RIGHT?
AREN'T THOSE CALLED "BLACK DIAMD-NDS"?

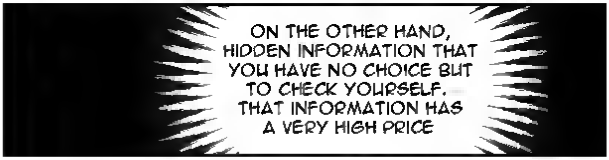
BECAUSE A "BLACK DIAMOND" IS THE MOST VALUABLE AND DANGEROUS DIAMOND IN THE WORLD!!
FIGURE OUT THE MYSTERY OF THAT "BLACK DIAMOND"!!
"TO OBTAIN THAT INFORMATION, YOU'RE ALLOWED TO USE METHODS OUTSIDE THE LAW."
"IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THE CRIMINAL IS DEAD OR ALIVE."
THE MOST VALUABLE AND DANGE-ROUS!?

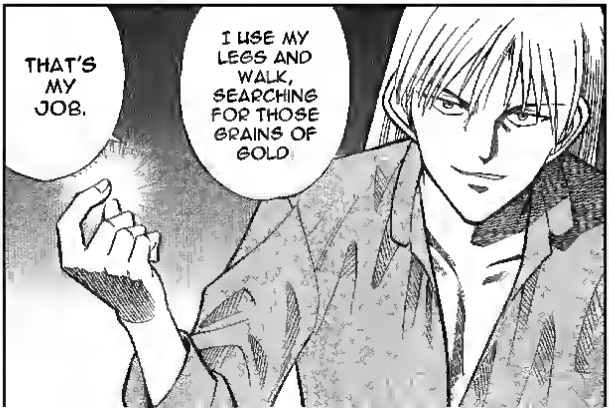
"DEAD OR ALIVE!?"
AND YOU ACCEPTED SUCH A RECKLESS REQUEST...!
IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE YOU'RE A COP
SO, WHAT'S YOUR JOB "R"!?
SO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE "TRUE ANSWER" RIGHT AWAY, HUH?

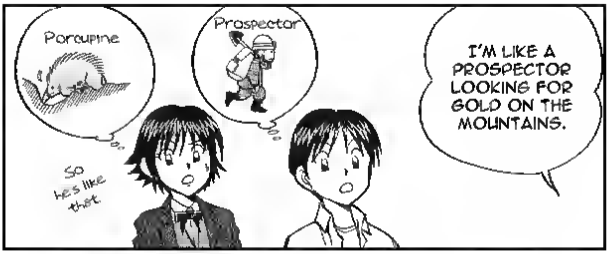
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE "ANSWER"
I'LL GIVE THE INFORMATION A PRICE.
SELLING INFORMATION!?
I SEARCH FOR AND SELL VALUABLE INFORMATION.
SO YOU'RE A SPY FROM SOME COUNTRY!?
THAT IS MY JOB.
NO! IT'S NOT THAT SORT OF THING!!

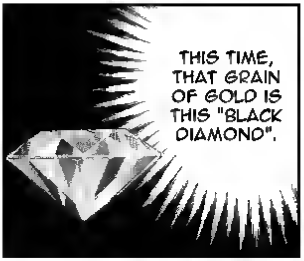

IS THAT CONNECTED TO YOUR JOB?
BUT, NOW TV AND THE INTERNET CONNECT THE WORLD IN AN INFORMATION NETWORK! IN THIS DAY AND AGE, IF WE WANT TO KNOW SOMETHING, WE CAN IMMEDIATELY FIGURE IT OUT!
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND AT ALL, HUH?
THE INFORMATION NETWORK OF THE PRESENT CONNECTS THE WORLD AND CAN CROSS BARRIERS LIKE COUNTRY BORDERS AND DISTANCE.
IT'S AN ERA WHERE A LOT OF INFORMATION CAN MIX TOGETHER.

DOES THAT KIND OF INFOR-MATION HAVE ANY VALUE?
FURTHERMORE, LIES AND FALSEHOODS ARE MIXED IN LIKE SAND.
IN SHORT, IT'S AS IF YOU THREW OUT YOUR SUGAR AND SALT. ANYTHING YOU COOK WILL TASTE THE SAME INFORMATION LIKE THAT HAS DECREASED VALUE.


ON THE OTHER HAND, HIDDEN INFORMATION THAT YOU HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO CHECK YOURSELF. THAT INFORMATION HAS A VERY HIGH PRICE


I USE MY LEGS AND WALK, SEARCHING FOR THOSE GRAINS OF GOLD
THAT'S MY JOB.


Porcupine
Prospector
I'M LIKE A PROSPECTOR LOOKING FOR GOLD ON THE MOUNTAINS.
So he's like that


THIS TIME, THAT GRAIN OF GOLD IS THIS "BLACK DIAMOND".

I'LL BE SEARCHING FOR AND SELLING THE INFORMATION THAT MY CLIENT REQUESTED

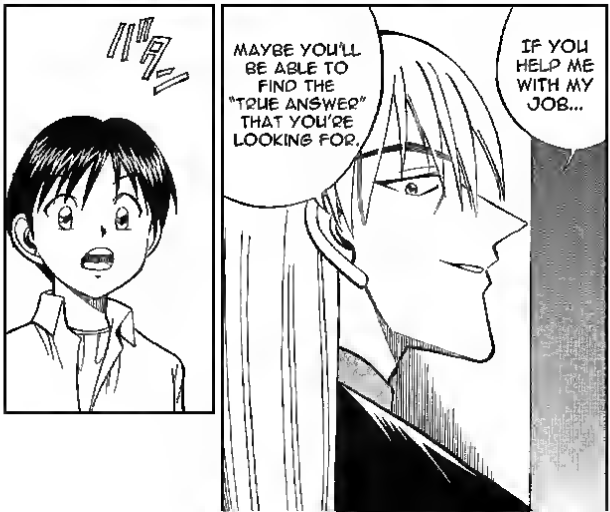
REMEMBER WHAT I SAID? THAT'S MY JOB.

IS IT MONEY?

OKAY, NOW I'LL TAKE THE FEE FOR THAT INFORMATION.

LIKE I SAID BEFORE, "I'LL BE THE ONE TO DETERMINE THE PRICE".
NO, I DON'T NEED MONEY.
HUH !?
WILL YOU HELP ME WITH MY JOB?
WHY DOES MIZUNASHI -KUN HAVE TO HELP YOU!?
BECAUSE, IN ORDER TO FIND KIDENIA, I NEED SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THIS REGION VERY WELL.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU REFUSE, YOU KNOW?

NO! DON'T LISTEN TO HIM!
TOMORROW, I'LL BE WAITING AT THE CONSTRUC-TION SITE.
HUH !?
DON'T EXPECT A FREE ANSWER!
THINK OF THIS AS A LESSON.


IF YOU HELP ME WITH MY JOB...
MAYBE YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIND THE "TRUE ANSWER" THAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.

YES, BUT...
LET'S JUST REPORT THIS TO THE POLICE!! RIGHT?!

MIZUNASHI -KUN, DON'T DO IT!! YOU ABSOLUTELY SHOULDN'T GO!!

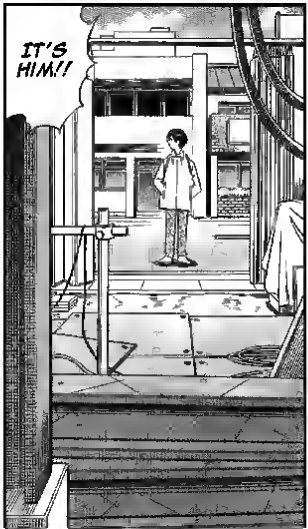
A WAY TO FIND "THE TRUE ANSWER"...

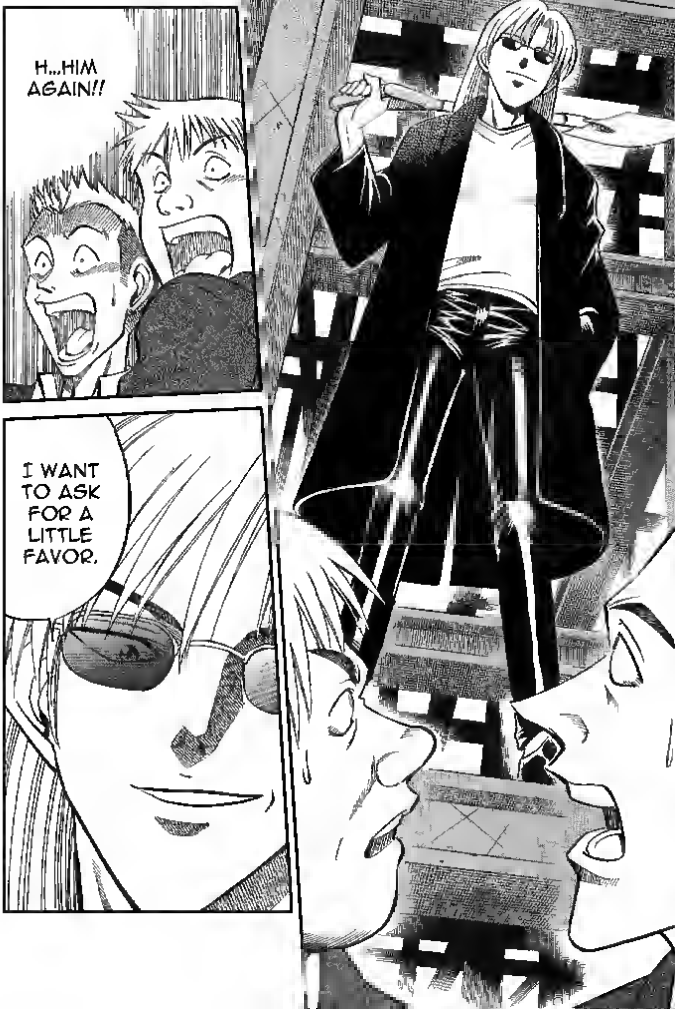
AND PERHAPS EVEN MY MEMORIES...

OH!?
!

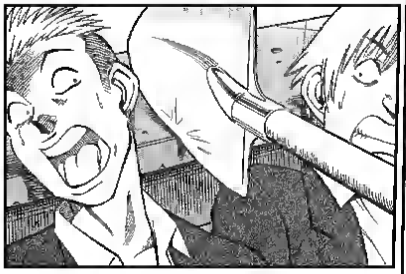
EVERY TIME, SOMETHING STOPS US FROM BULLYING HIM
AND HE'S ALONE TODAY !?

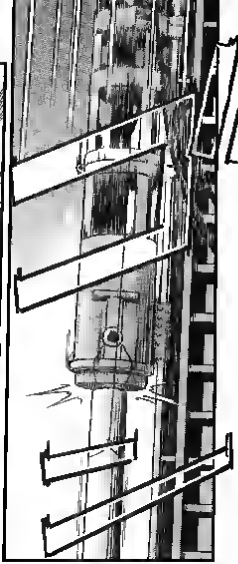
HEY.
THIS TIME WE CAN GET HIS MONEY FOR SURE—

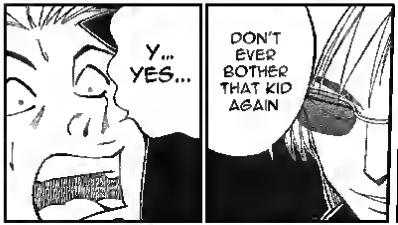

IT'S HIM!!


H...HIM AGAIN!!
I WANT TO ASK FOR A LITTLE FAVOR.

AAAAH!!



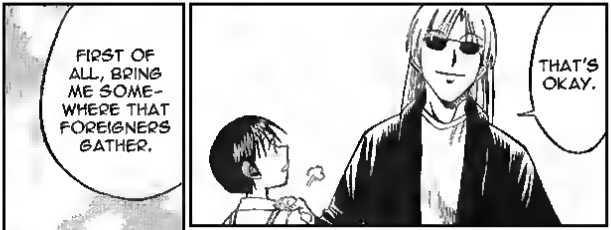



Y... YES...
DON'T EVER BOTHER THAT KID AGAIN

THAT'S GREAT.

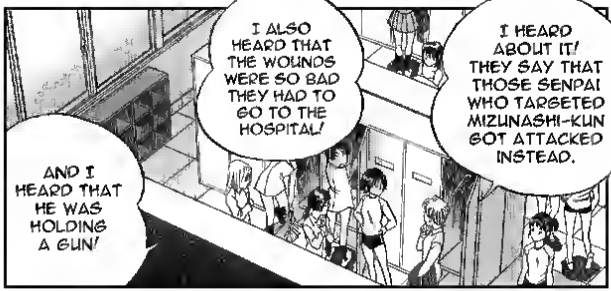
HEY!

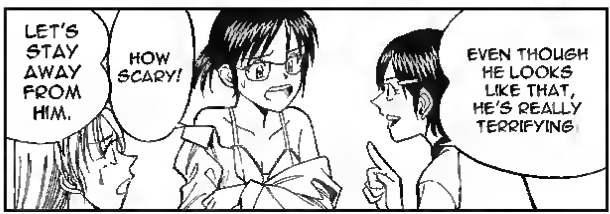
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHETHER I CAN HELP OR NOT.
SO YOU CAME


FIRST OF ALL, BRING ME SOMEWHERE THAT FOREIGNERS GATHER.
THAT'S OKAY.

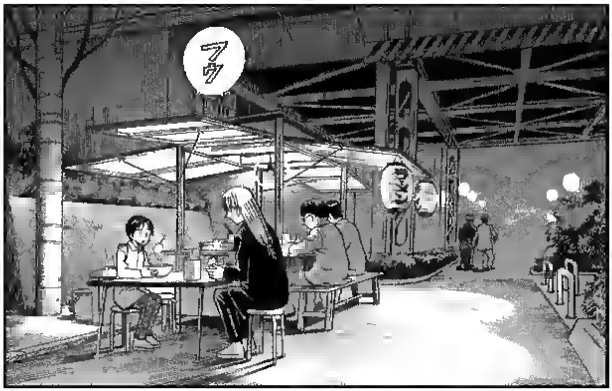
*This is the 109 department store in Shibuya

LOCKED DOWN THE AIR-PORTS!?
!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, I'VE LOCKED DOWN ALL THE AIRPORTS AND DOCKS
MAYBE HE'S NOT IN JAPAN ANYMORE
JUST WHO IS THIS GUY!?
WHAT !?
MIZUNASHI -KUN WAS SEEN WITH A YAKUZA?


I HEARD ABOUT IT! THEY SAY THAT THOSE SENPAI WHO TARGETED MIZUNASHI-KUN GOT ATTACKED INSTEAD.
I ALSO HEARD THAT THE WOUNDS WERE SO BAD THEY HAD TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL!
AND I HEARD THAT HE WAS HOLDING A GUN!


EVEN THOUGH HE LOOKS LIKE THAT, HE'S REALLY TERRIFYING
HOW SCARY!
LET'S STAY AWAY FROM HIM.

ISN'T NAGATSUKI GOING OUT WITH MIZU-NASHI?
WOW!
HE HAS TO BE STOPPED ...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THERE AREN'T ANY LEADS HERE.
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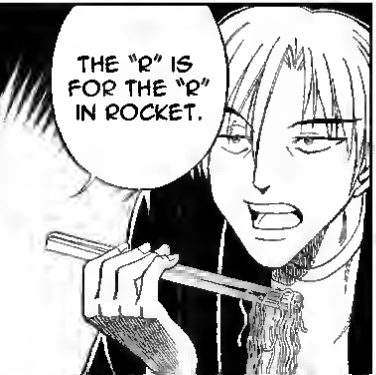
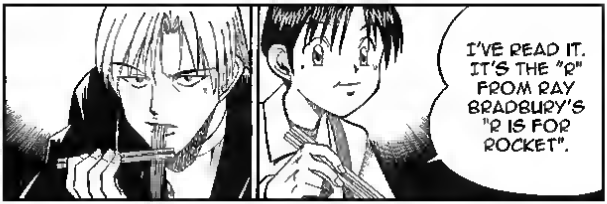
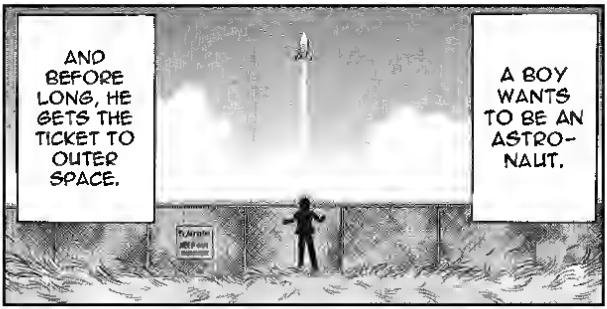

THE "R" IS FOR THE "R" IN ROCKET.

SOONER OR LATER, THE ANSWER WILL JUST SUDDENLY APPEAR
DON'T RUSH IT


I'VE READ IT. IT'S THE "R" FROM RAY BRADBURY'S "R IS FOR ROCKET".


A BOY WANTS TO BE AN ASTRO-NAUT.
AND BEFORE LONG, HE GETS THE TICKET TO OUTER SPACE.

YES... I DO LIKE IT.

OH, REALLY?
PUT THE PEPPER OVER THERE!
BUT SPICES ARE SOME-THING I DON'T LIKE.

IT WAS INTER-ESTING
DO YOU LIKE THAT STORY?

BUT... THAT'S GOOD. IT DOES SAY THAT SOON NORMAL PEOPLE WILL BE ABLE TO GO TO OUTER SPACE
YOU'RE 14, DON'T TALK LIKE YOU'RE AN OLD MAN.
SPACE IS A PLACE THAT IF YOU HAVE THE WILL...
YOU CAN GO TO WITH YOUR OWN EFFORT.

BY THE WAY, WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO HELP ME?

.....

THAT'S WRONG
EH!? BUT... YOU'RE THE ONE WHO ASKED ME TO HELP.

I WANT TO FIND THE TRUE ANSWER

YOU CAME HERE BY YOUR OWN WILL.

ARE MY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES REAL!?

THAT'S NOT IT, IS IT?
YOU GIVE ME AN ANSWER, THEN!
I DON'T HAVE A REASON! I WANT TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF PERSON I AM. ISN'T THAT A NORMAL THING TO WANT!?
WHY?
WHY DO YOU WANT TO KNOW "YOURSELF"?
IT'LL BE EXPEN-SIVE.
YOU'RE ASKING ME FOR ANOTHER ANSWER?
BECAUSE THIS WORLD... LOOKS LIKE IT'S COMPLETELY MADE OF LIES!!

THAT'S GOOD...
YOU NEED TO HAVE A REASON TO OBSESS OVER THE TRUTH.
ゴゴゴゴ
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
BY THE WAY, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
HUH? MY NAME?
OBVI-OUSLY.

I'M MIZUNASHI YO.
YO, HUH...

IN THAT CASE, YO...
FROM HERE ON, I WANT TO CHANGE OUR TACTICS.

YOU AND I...
WILL BE SPLITTING UP TO SEARCH.

YOU CAN DO IT!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! HE'LL SWING THAT SHARP WEAPON AT ME!!
I DON'T WANT TO!! I MIGHT BE KILLED!!
ABSO-LUTELY NOT!!
WHAT!? I'LL BE LOOKING FOR HIM ON MY OWN!?
NATURALLY YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAID THAT WE HAVE TO WIDEN OUR SEARCH AREA

OR DO YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO HOW IT WAS!?
TO THE WORLD THAT'S ONLY LIES!!
YOU ALREADY STEPPED IN THIS WORLD ON YOUR OWN!!

I PROMISE THAT AFTER WE FINISH THIS, YOU WILL DEFI-NITELY...
FIND THE WAY TO FIND THE "TRUE ANSWER"!!

THIS IS MY HOTEL
I'M STAYING THERE UNDER THE NAME OF BRADBURY!
IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, YOU CAN CONTACT ME HERE!
AND, I DON'T FORGIVE PEOPLE WHO RUN AWAY IN THE MIDDLE OF THINGS!
HAH
HAH
HAH

HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
!!

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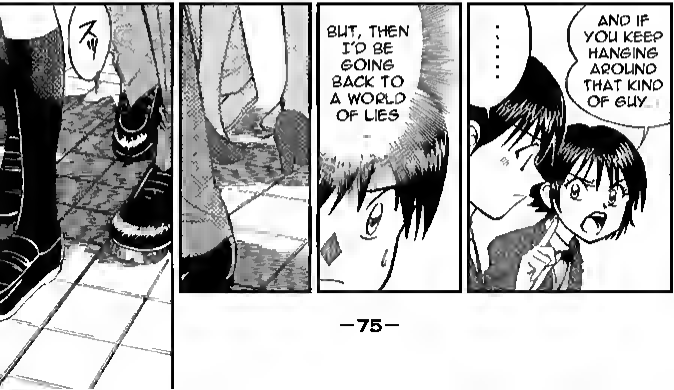
HA-H
HA-H
……

MIZUNASHI -KUN, THIS IS DANGER-OUS!
YOU COULD BE KILLED!

ON TOP OF THAT, THERE'S A LOT OF STRANGE RUMORS ABOUT YOU!
NOTHING GOOD WILL COME BY GETTING YOURSELF INVOLVED WITH PEOPLE LIKE 'R'!
IF THAT CONTINUES, YOU'LL BECOME EVEN MORE OF AN OUTCAST!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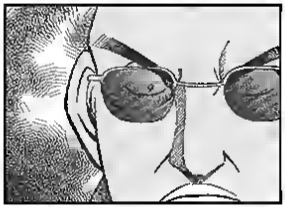
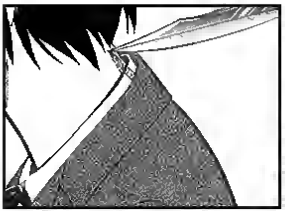
BUT, THEN I'D BE GOING BACK TO A WORLD OF LIES
.....
AND IF YOU KEEP HANGING AROUND THAT KIND OF GUY

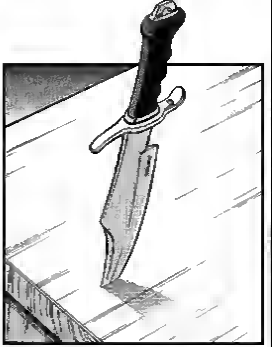
!!

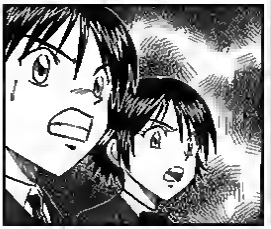


KIDE-
NIA!!



COME WITH ME!
I TOLD YOU NOTHING GOOD WOULD COME OF IT!
SEE!





WHO IS HE?
THE MAN WHO WAS WITH YOU

HE'S TALKING ABOUT R, RIGHT?

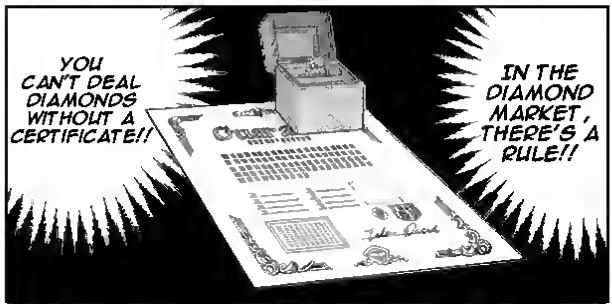
YOU ...

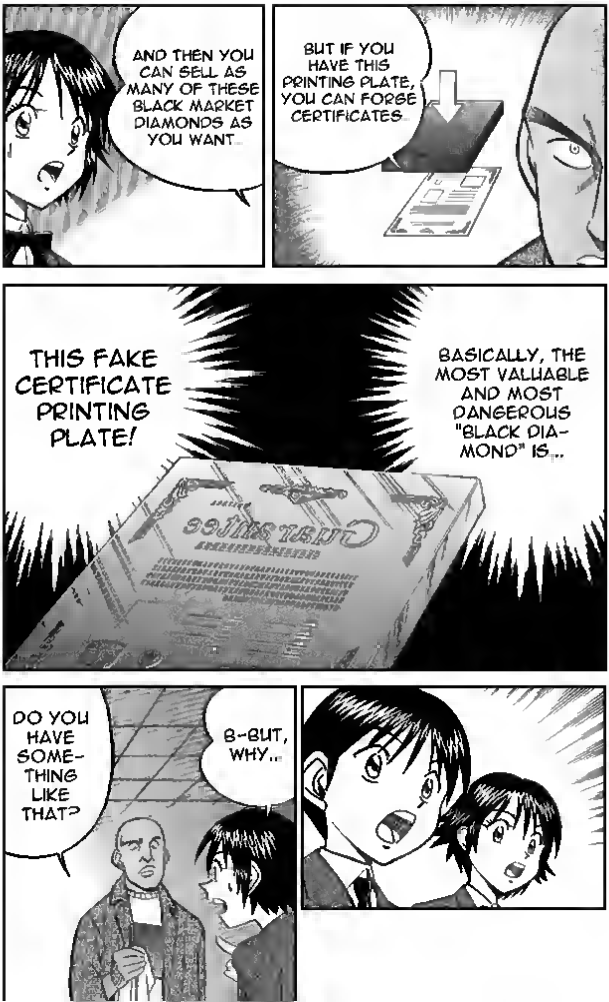
A DIA-MOND?
HE WAS LOOKING FOR A DIAMOND YOU STOLE..
I-I DON'T KNOW
!!
DO YOU MEAN THIS?
HUH!?
IF HE ONLY WANTED THAT, I WOULD HAVE GIVEN IT TO HIM.
THIS IS WHAT THAT MAN WANTED?

BUT THEY'RE MOSTLY WORTHLESS.
YOU CAN DEFINITELY SAY THAT THESE ARE "BLACK DIAMONDS"
BUT AREN'T THOSE THE "BLACK DIAMONDS" WHICH ARE THE MOST VALUABLE IN THE WHOLE WORLD!?
IF HE ONLY WANTED THAT...
THE TWO OF YOU HAVE MISUNDER-STOOD.
MY COUNTRY IS A SMALL ONE IN AFRICA... THERE IS A WAR BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT TROOPS AND THE REVOLUTIONARIES.
DIAMONDS ARE MINED IN MY COUNTRY, SO THEY WERE DUG UP BY THE REVOLUTIONARIES TO FUND THEIR WAR EFFORT.

BLACK MARKET DIAMONDS USED TO FUND THE WAR!!
IN OTHER WORDS, "BLACK DIAMONDS" ARE...
THOSE DIAMONDS WERE PUT ON THE MARKET.
THEY WERE CALLED "BLACK DIAMONDS".
THAT MAN IS LOOKING FOR THAT ..
SO I WAS RIGHT...
THAT THEY WERE THE MOST VALUABLE AND MOST DANGEROUS DIAMONDS IN THE WORLD...
BUT, HE SAID ...

AN IRON PLATE?
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY DIAMONDS I HAVE, BECAUSE I CAN'T EXCHANGE THEM FOR MONEY.


YOU CAN'T DEAL DIAMONDS WITHOUT A CERTIFICATE!!
IN THE DIAMOND MARKET, THERE'S A RULE!!

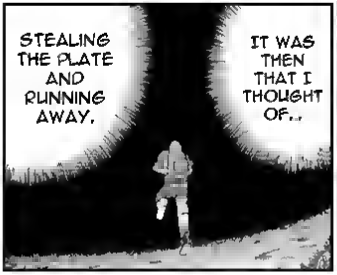

AND THEN YOU CAN SELL AS MANY OF THESE BLACK MARKET DIAMONDS AS YOU WANT.
BUT IF YOU HAVE THIS PRINTING PLATE, YOU CAN FORGE CERTIFICATES.
THIS FAKE CERTIFICATE PRINTING PLATE!
BASICALLY, THE MOST VALUABLE AND MOST DANGEROUS "BLACK DIAMOND" IS...
DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
B-BUT, WHY...

MY COUNTRY HAS BEEN IN CIVIL WAR.
EVER SINCE I WAS A KID...
THAT'S THE REASON WHY I JOINED THE REVOLU TIONARIES!
BOTH OF MY PARENTS WERE MURDERED BY THE GOV ERNMENT'S ARMY
I HAVE KILLED A LOT OF PEOPLE.
I HAVE KILLED ...

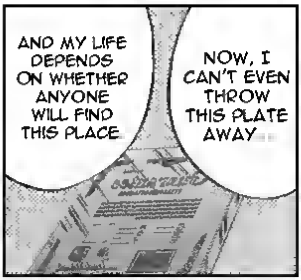
ONCE, THE SON OF SOMEONE I HAD KILLED WAS CLINGING TO HIS BODY AND CRYING.
AND I SAW THAT THAT CHILD WAS LIKE ME!!
I CHASED THAT BOY...
I WANTED TO SHOOT HIM...
BUT I COULDN'T DO IT...

THERE WERE MORE AND MORE PEOPLE LIKE ME.
EVEN THOUGH I WASN'T THE ONE PULLING THE TRIGGER, PEOPLE STILL DIED BECAUSE OF ME

BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO KILL PEOPLE, I SWITCHED TO THE TEAM SELLING THE "BLACK DIAMONDS"...
BUT, I REALIZED SOMETHING ONE DAY.

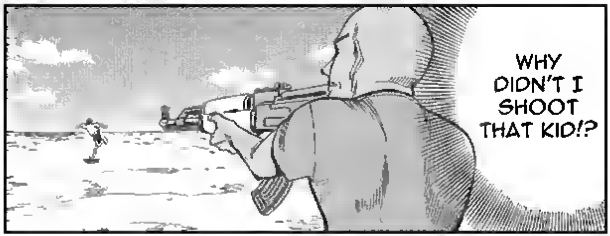

STEALING THE PLATE AND RUNNING AWAY.
IT WAS THEN THAT I THOUGHT OF...

I'M AL-READY TIRED.

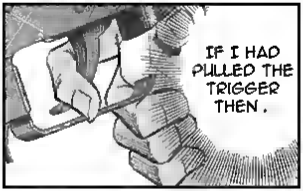

AND MY LIFE DEPENDS ON WHETHER ANYONE WILL FIND THIS PLACE
NOW, I CAN'T EVEN THROW THIS PLATE AWAY...

AND THEN, THE WHOLE WORLD WAS CHASING ME...

MY DAD WAS A SMARTLY DRESSED MAN.
HE OWNED A VERY NICE WATCH.
.....
!!
WHEN I WAS A KID, I REALLY WANTED TO SEE IT.
IF ONLY I HADN'T TRIED TO LOOK AT IT..
WHY DID THIS HAPPEN?
BUT, I ENDED UP BREAKING THE WATCH.
AND THAT SITUATION WAS THE SAME.


WHY DIDN'T I SHOOT THAT KID!?

THE WHOLE WORLD WOULDN'T BE ON MY TAIL!!


IF I HAD PULLED THE TRIGGER THEN.

YOU SHOULD GO HOME...

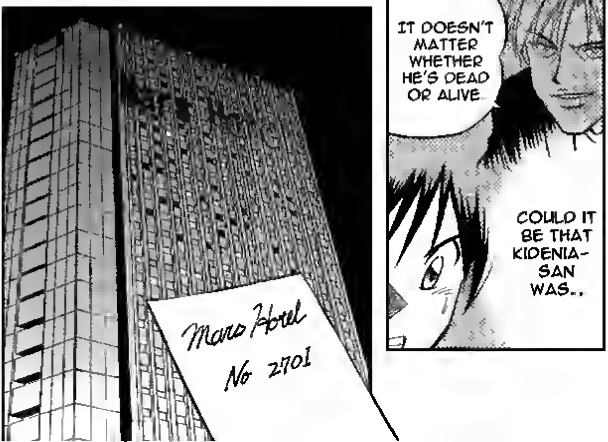
WHEN I BROKE MY FATHER'S WATCH, I REGRETTED THAT...
IT'S OK.
BUT KIDENIA-SAN!
STOPPING MYSELF FROM SHOOTING THAT KID.
BUT I DON'T REGRET ...

YEAH...
BUT I FEEL SORRY FOR KIDENIA-SAN. WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP HIM!
THAT WAS SCARY.
I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO GET OURSELVES KILLED!
HE ALREADY TOLD US HIS ADDRESS, ANYWAY...
THEN SHOULD WE DISCUSS THIS WITH R...?
HA HA HA, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT...
BUT R WAS A LITTLE SLOPPY, WASN'T HE? I MEAN, WE FOUND THE "BLACK DIAMOND" BEFORE HE DID.
He just acts cool!
WE FOUND IT BEFORE HIM!?

THE ANSWER WILL UNEXPECTEDLY APPEAR.
NO WAY!?
WHAT'S WRONG!? WHY DID YOU SUDDENLY RUSH BACK HERE!?

KIDENIA-SAN ISN'T HERE!!
AND THE PLATE IS GONE TOO.

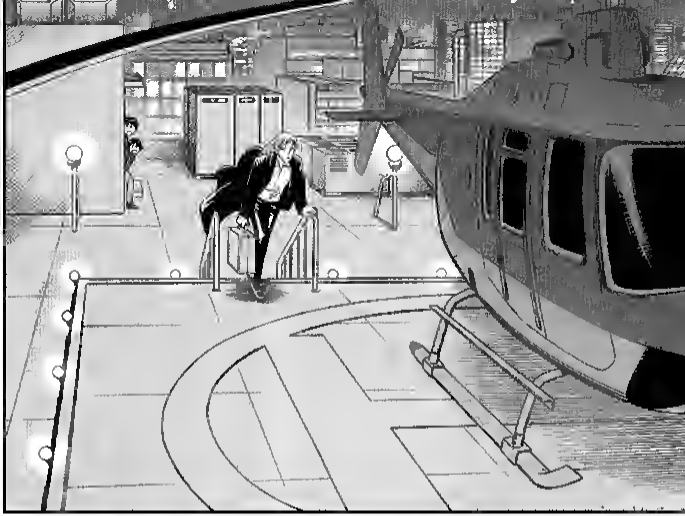
THAT GUY!!
WHAT DOES IT MEAN!?


Mano Hotel
No 2701
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER HE'S DEAD OR ALIVE
COULD IT BE THAT KIDENIA-SAN WAS..

YES, THAT'S RIGHT! WE NEED TO SEE HIM BEFORE HE LEAVES!
MR. BRADBURY, RIGHT?

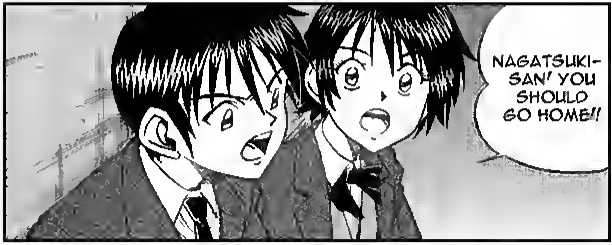
HE'S LEAVING FROM THE ROOF SOON.
IN THAT CASE, YOU'D BETTER HURRY...
OH...

LEAVING FROM THE ROOF!?



IT'S HIM!!

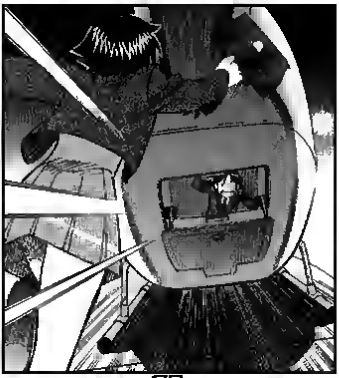
A HELI-COP-TER?


NAGATSUKI-SAN! YOU SHOULD GO HOME!!

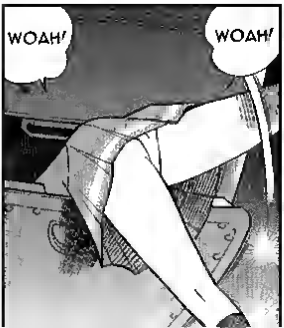
I WANT R TO...
CONFIRM SOME-THING FOR ME.
AH!
バビュ
DO YOU THINK I'D LET YOU LEAVE ME BEHIND?
!!
ウイイィ…

ドン!!

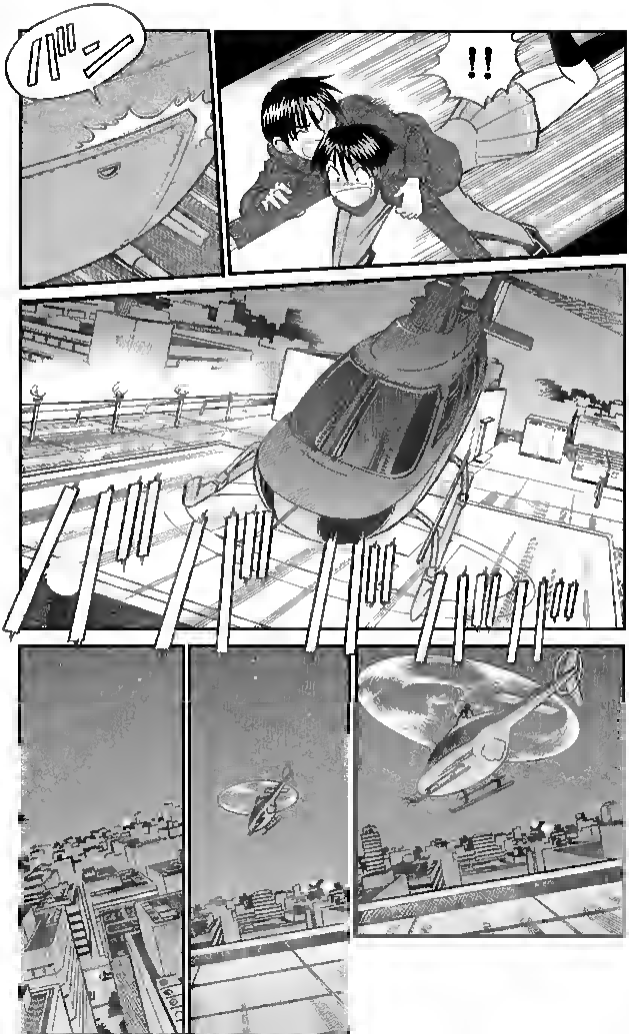
DON'T!! IT'S DANGER-OUS!!



DON'T ORDER ME AROUND !!


WOAH!
WOAH!

ガィ

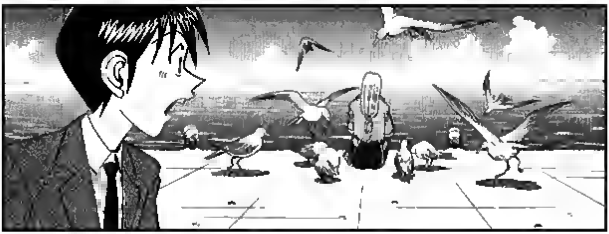


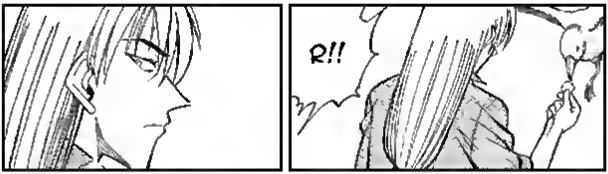
IS IT ABOUT KIDENIA-SAN?
WELL, THAT TOO ...
WHAT DID YOU NEED TO CHECK WITH R?
ゴゴゴ
HEY, MIZU-NASHI-KUN!
"WHAT IS YOUR JOB?"
"WHY DO YOU HAVE THAT WOUND?"
"WHAT'S YOUR NAME?"
NAGATSUKI-SAN, DO YOU REMEMBER?
THERE WERE 3 QUESTIONS I ASKED R
WITHOUT ASKING ME FOR ANY-THING!!
BUT HE TOLD ME THE REASON FOR HIS WOUND
HE ORDERED ME TO HELP HIM AS THE PRICE FOR TELLING ME HIS JOB.
HE TOLD ME HIS NAME
IN EX-CHANGE FOR STITCHING UP HIS STOMACH

HE ...
SO, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
TRICKED ME!!

WE'VE STOPPED!
THE DOOR'S OPEN

WHERE IS THIS!?




R!!

R! WHERE IS THIS!?

WHERE DO YOU THINK?

TO FOLLOW ME ALL THE WAY HERE
YOU ARE REALLY ARE RECK-LESS KIDS

THAT'S GOOD, YO.
キッ
BUT SINCE IT'S WARM HERE, I GUESS IT'S CLOSE TO THE EQUATOR.
I DON'T KNOW ...
USED ME AS BAIT!!
YOU ...
WOULD THINK THAT I WAS ONE OF YOUR ASSOCIATES.
THAT WAS SO THAT KIDENIA-SAN, WHO WAS WATCHING US FROM SOME-WHERE...
YOU ASKED ME TO WALK AROUND WITH YOU IN TOKYO!!

"IT'LL BE EASY TO DEAL WITH A KID! I'LL GET INFORMATION FROM HIM."
THAT'S DEFINITELY WHAT KIDENIA-SAN THOUGHT!!

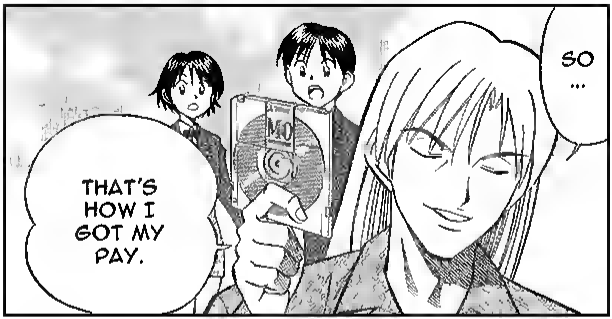
YOU WERE FOLLOWING ME WHILE WAITING FOR KIDENIA-SAN TO SHOW UP.
AND THEN YOU WERE ABLE TO FIND HIS HIDEOUT!!
AND I WAS RELEASED AS BAIT.
WE'LL BE SPLITTING UP TO SEARCH

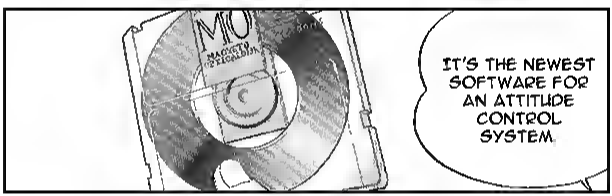
YOU TRICKED ME!!
BECAUSE I NEEDED THAT INFORMATION TO BECOME BAIT!!
YOU TOLD ME HOW YOU GOT HURT WITHOUT ASKING FOR ANYTHING...

BUT I KEPT MY PROMISE, DIDN'T I?
FIRST, GO TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME USING YOUR OWN LEGS.
THEN GATHER THE INFORMATION WITH YOUR OWN EYES AND EARS
AND FINALLY, THINK ABOUT IT ON YOUR OWN.
THAT'S THE WAY TO FINALLY ARRIVE AT "THE TRUE ANSWER".

AND WHAT ABOUT KIDENIA-SAN!? DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE KILLED HIM.
I'M NOT A HIT MAN, YOU KNOW.
I THINK THAT HE'S PROBABLY BEEN ABLE TO ESCAPE ..
I NEGOTIATED WITH HIM. IN EXCHANGE FOR THE PLATE, I OFFERED HIM A NEW I.D. AND MONEY.

DON'T TELL ME YOU GAVE IT BACK TO BE USED IN THE CIVIL WAR IN KIDENIA-SAN'S COUNTRY..
S-SO. WHERE IS THE PLATE!?
THE UN PROPOSED A PLAN TO CUT OFF FUNDING TO THE GUERILLA FORCES
OH!! THE NEWS ON TV.
TO STOP THE FUNDING OF THE CIVIL WAR, THEY SWITCHED TO THIS STRATEGY
NO! MY CLIENT THIS TIME WAS THE U.N.!
I DON'T TRADE THINGS THAT I DON'T KNOW THE VALUE OF.
I CAN DECIDE THE VALUE OF INFORMATION, BUT I CAN'T DECIDE THE VALUE OF SOMETHING LIKE HUMAN LIFE


SO ...
MO
THAT'S HOW I GOT MY PAY.

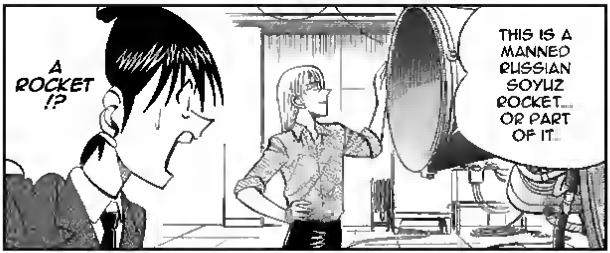

MO
MAGNETO OPTICAL
IT'S THE NEWEST SOFTWARE FOR AN ATTITUDE CONTROL SYSTEM.

?
WHAT'S THAT?

HMPH

YOU TIRING KIDS ...
COME WITH ME.
THERE'S A LIGHT
HE MUST FEEL GUILTY ABOUT SOMETHING. THAT'S WHY HE LIVES IN A PLACE LIKE THIS

WHAT IS THAT!?



R is for ROCKET - End

ROCKETMAN

ROCKETMAN

Rocket Man

R is for Rocket: Part One

Text Provider: Hant00
Translator: Saturn Beaver
Cleaner: dragons-son
Proofer: yasiru
Typesetter: argentscarf
QC: dudun-dudun

R is for Rocket is the story of C. M. Christopher, a boy who wants to become an astronaut. But, you can't apply to be an astronaut, you can only be chosen. So he and his friend Ralph can only wait for the day that a blue helicopter will arrive on their doorstep and out will step an engineer that will tell them they have been selected...

ORIONWAVE

R is for Rocket: Part Two

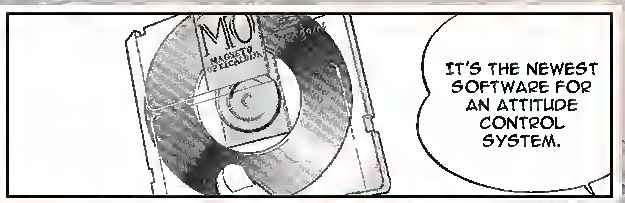
Text Provider: Hant00
Translator: Saturn Beaver
Cleaner/Typesetter: argentscarf
QC: Anon

"I thought about my dreams. The Moon Rocket. It won't be part of me, part of my *dream* any longer. I'll be part of *it*."

ORIONWAVE

R is for Rocket: Part Three

Text Provider: Hant00
Translator: Saturn Beaver
Cleaner: Dragons-son
Typesetter: Kirhidemi and dudun-dudun
QC: argentscarf

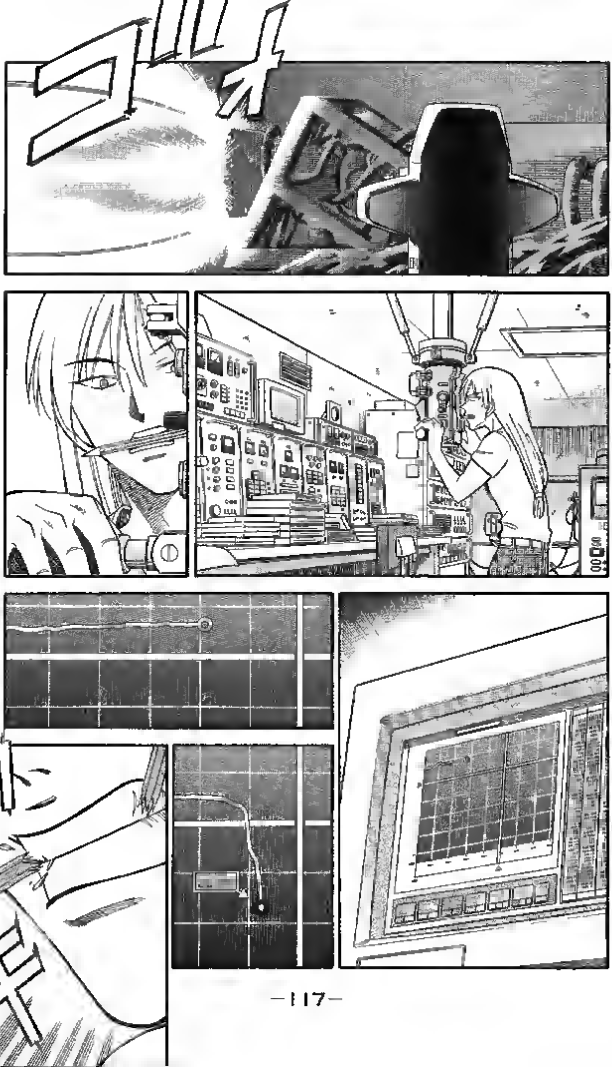


If this weren't spacecraft related, I would think it was mind control software.

ORIONWAVE

МОСКОВСКОЕ

Episode 2
Age of the Pussyfoot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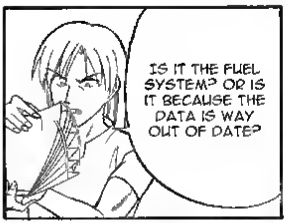
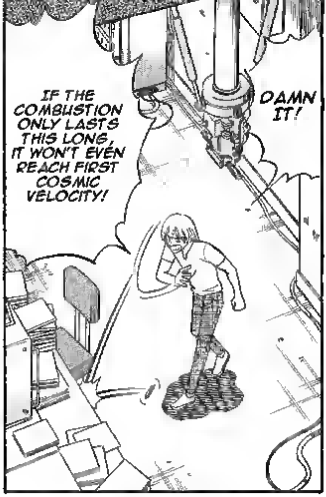
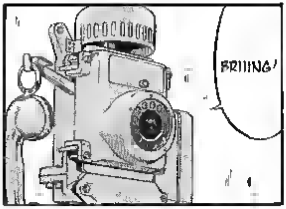
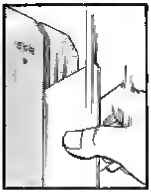
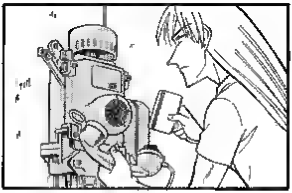

IS IT THE FUEL SYSTEM? OR IS IT BECAUSE THE DATA IS WAY OUT OF DATE?

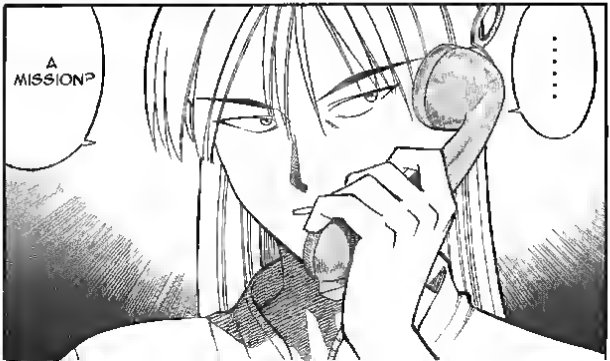

IF THE COMBUSTION ONLY LASTS THIS LONG, IT WON'T EVEN REACH FIRST COSMIC VELOCITY!
DAMN IT!


BRIIING!

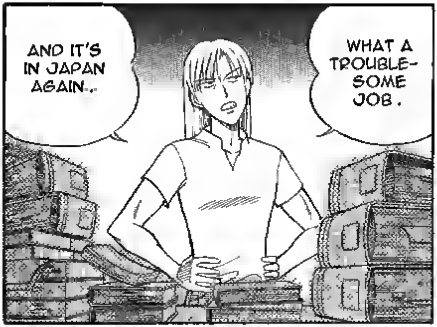
SCR
DING

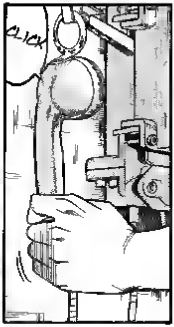





A MISSION?
.....

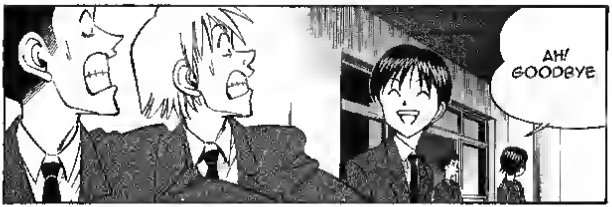
AND THE REWARD... WELL...
WHAT IS IT ABOUT?


AND IT'S IN JAPAN AGAIN..
WHAT A TROUBLE-SOME JOB.

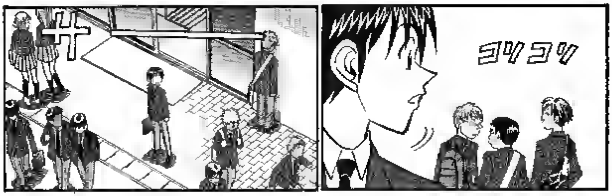

CLICK

IF ONLY THERE WAS ANOTHER WAY—
I HAVE A PILE OF THINGS TO DO, SO I CAN'T DO THIS PROPERLY BY MYSELF.

キーンコーン
カーン
IN JAPAN, HUH...
SEE YOU LATER!
THE CLUB MEETING IS AT THE GYM TODAY, RIGHT?
DO YOU WANT TO HANG OUT?


AH! GOODBYE

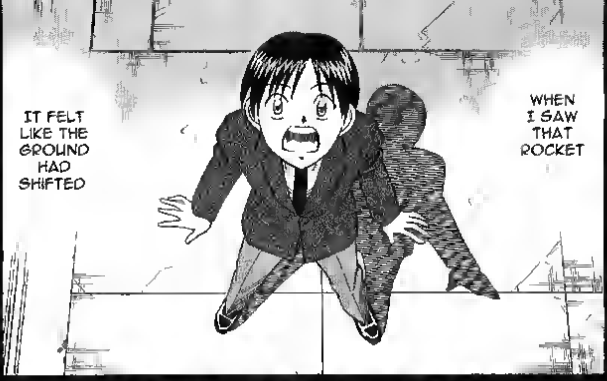
WELL, THEN
Y-YOU TOO


ヨソヨソ

IT'S NO USE! EVERYONE IS SCARED OF YOU NOW.
...?

NAGA-
TSUKI
-SAN.
I TOLD YOU, BEING ASSOCIATED WITH THAT KIND OF PERSON WILL BRING YOU BAD LUCK!
THAT KIND OF PERSON ?
I'M TALKING ABOUT HIM R!
HE BEAT UP THOSE UPPER-CLASSMEN WHO BULLIED YOU, RIGHT?

BUT IN MY OPIN-ION.
THE OTHER STUDENTS GIVE YOU A WIDE BERTH AS WELL, RIGHT? THEY DON'T WANT TO END UP LIKE THOSE GUYS.
.....
HE'S AN AMAZING GUY.
THAT ROCKET!!


IT FELT LIKE THE GROUND HAD SHIFTED
WHEN I SAW THAT ROCKET

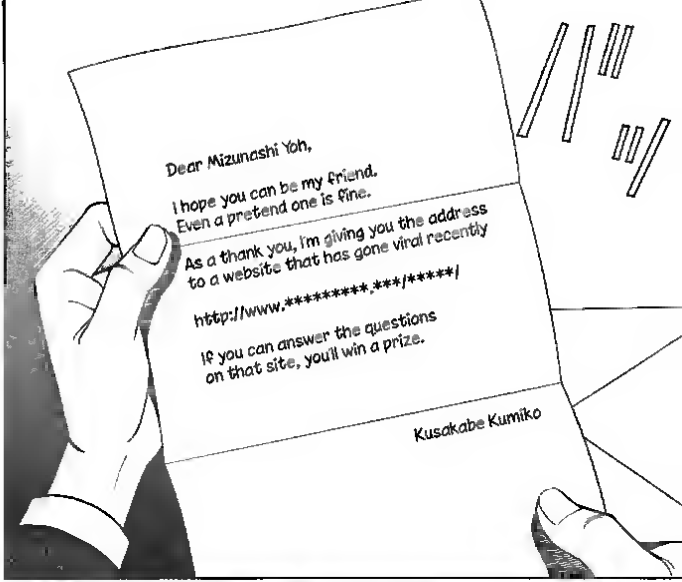
I WAS SHIVERING

ALL BY HIM-SELF!?
YEAH ....
YOU DID ALL THIS BY YOUR-SELF?
ACTUALLY, ALL I DID WAS ASSEMBLE THE COMPONENTS I RECEIVED AS PAYMENT FOR EVERY MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.

FROM WHOM?
COMPO-NENTS HE RECEIVED...
ROCKETS AREN'T FLOWN...
ARE YOU SURE THIS ROCKET YOU'RE BUILDING CAN FLY?
THEY'RE LAUNCHED.

IT WAS REALLY AMAZ-ING...
UNTIL THIS MOMENT, EVERY MORNING I WOKE UP TO AN ORDINARY LIFE
EVEN THOUGH IT'S NOT MY OWN POWER, EVEN THOUGH IT'S JUST HIS INFLUENCE...
WHEN I'M WITH HIM, I FEEL LIKE I CAN ESCAPE THIS WORLD FULL OF LIES ON MY OWN
BUT IT'S ALL JUST A DREAM ANYWAY
WE'RE TWO VERY DIFFERENT PEOPLE.
PATHETIC, HUH?
BUT YOU STITCHED UP HIS WOUND
I'D SAY THAT'S PRETTY AMAZING
PLUS IF YOU BECAME MORE LIKE HIM, NO ONE WOULD TALK TO YOU ANYMORE
UMM... MIZUNASHI -KUN.

PLEASE! READ THIS!
WHAT'S THIS?
EXCUSE ME!


Dear Mizunashi Yoh,
I hope you can be my friend.
Even a pretend one is fine.
As a thank you, I'm giving you the address to a website that has gone viral recently
http://www.*********.***/*****/
If you can answer the questions on that site, you'll win a prize.
Kusakabe Kumiko

HOW WOULD I KNOW? I HAVEN'T EVEN READ IT YET!
WHAT IS THIS?

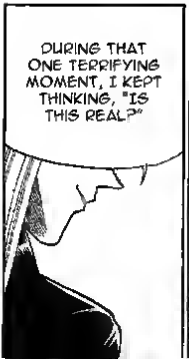
FIRST R, THEN THIS GIRL!
YOU KEEP ON ATTRACTING SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE!
MIZUNASHI -KUN THIS IS DANGEROUS!

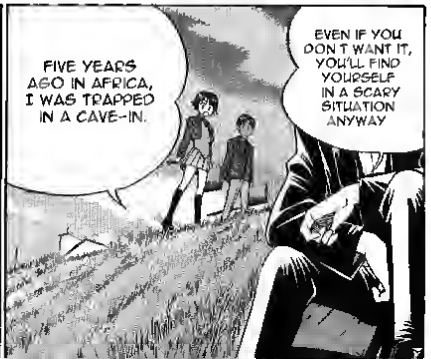
INSTINCT!
HOW DO YOU KNOW SHE'S SUSPICIOUS?

I DON'T WANT TO BE IN A SCARY SITUATION AGAIN

ANYWAY, STARTING FROM NOW, DON'T SEE R ANY MORE!
EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT R ISN'T HERE ANYWAY PLUS, I DON'T PLAN TO SEE HIM AGAIN...

SUSPI-CIOUS
I MUST BE RIGHT!

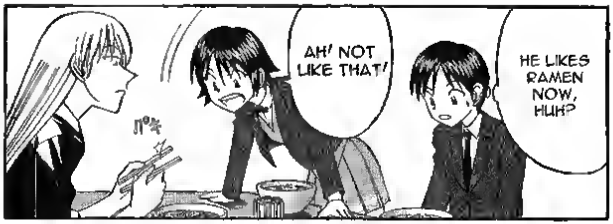

DURING THAT ONE TERRIFYING MOMENT, I KEPT THINKING, "IS THIS REAL?"


FIVE YEARS AGO IN AFRICA, I WAS TRAPPED IN A CAVE-IN.
EVEN IF YOU DON'T WANT IT, YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF IN A SCARY SITUATION ANYWAY

GOOD OR BAD, WHAT WE'RE FACING IS REALITY.

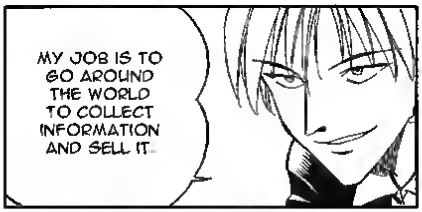
R!?

MY TREAT PLEASE, HELP YOURSELF
HERE'S YOUR ORDER!
ゴト


AH! NOT LIKE THAT!
HE LIKES RAMEN NOW, HUH?

He can't stand spices.
YOH, TRADE WITH ME.

It will taste better
YOU HAVE TO ADD PEPPER

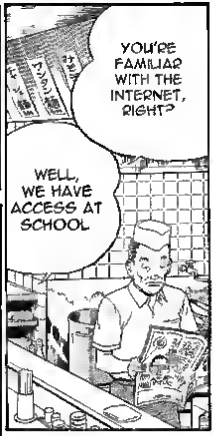

MY JOB IS TO GO AROUND THE WORLD TO COLLECT INFORMATION AND SELL IT.

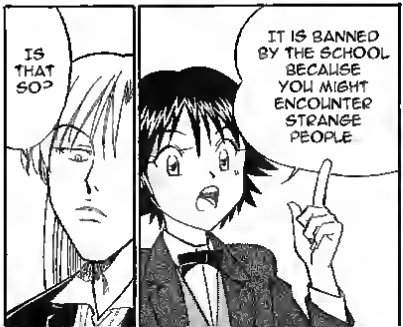
SO... WHY ARE YOU HERE, R?
I'M ON A MISSION, OF COURSE!
塩ラーメン
チャ
ワ
ジャー

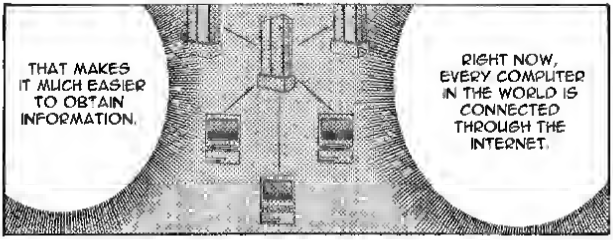
BY THE WAY, HAVE YOU HEARD ANY RUMORS CIRCULATING AMONG KIDS YOUR AGE?
RUMOR? WHAT RUMOR?
Kids..?

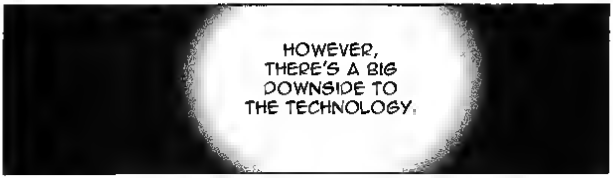
CODE-BREAK-ING!?
IT'S ABOUT CODE-BREAKING.

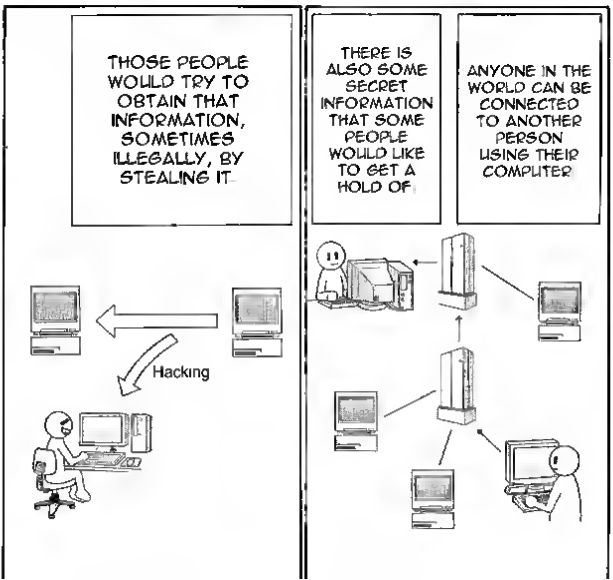
WELL, NOT THAT...
WELL... DO YOU KNOW HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN WEBSITE?


YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH THE INTERNET, RIGHT?
WELL, WE HAVE ACCESS AT SCHOOL


IS THAT SO?
IT IS BANNED BY THE SCHOOL BECAUSE YOU MIGHT ENCOUNTER STRANGE PEOPLE


THAT MAKES IT MUCH EASIER TO OBTAIN INFORMATION.
RIGHT NOW, EVERY COMPUTER IN THE WORLD IS CONNECTED THROUGH THE INTERNET.


HOWEVER, THERE'S A BIG DOWNSIDE TO THE TECHNOLOGY.


THOSE PEOPLE WOULD TRY TO OBTAIN THAT INFORMATION, SOMETIMES ILLEGALLY, BY STEALING IT.
Hacking
THERE IS ALSO SOME SECRET INFORMATION THAT SOME PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO GET A HOLD OF.
ANYONE IN THE WORLD CAN BE CONNECTED TO ANOTHER PERSON USING THEIR COMPUTER.

INFOR-
MATION IS
ENCRYPTED
TO PREVENT
THAT FROM
HAPPENING
THE INFOR-
MATION MEANT
TO BE KEPT
A SECRET IS
ENCRYPTED
USING A
SPECIAL
PROGRAM
AND ONLY
THE INTENDED
RECIPIENT
WILL BE
ABLE TO
DECRYPT IT
どうも。
ご無沙汰しています。
私は相変わらずです。
さて例の件ですが、
進めたいと思うのですが
IN OTHER WORDS,
THE INFORMATION
CANNOT BE
ACCESSED WITHOUT
HAVING THE KEY
TO DECODE THE
ENCRYPTION

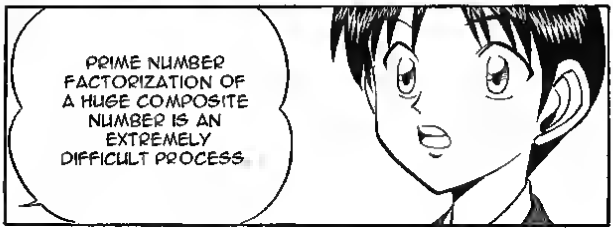
THIS PROCESS IS WHAT'S CALLED PRIME FACTOR-IZATION.

THEN, THERE IS THE DECOMPO-SITION OF A COMPOSITE NUMBER PRODUCT INTO PRIME NUMBERS

I THINK YOU'VE LEARNED ABOUT THIS. NATURAL NUMBERS ARE DIVIDED INTO TWO CATEGORIES: PRIME NUMBERS AND COMPOSITE NUMBERS.

Composite Number	= Prime Number x Prime Number
9	= 3×3
77	= 7×11
299	= 23×13
1003	= 17×59

Composite Number	Prime Number
4 (2×2)	1
6 (2×3)	2
8 (2×4)	3
9 (3×3)	5
10 (2×5)	7
12 (3×4)	11
⋮	⋮

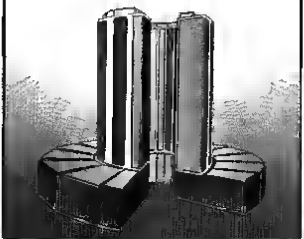


EVEN FOR THE FASTEST SUPER COMPUTER TO CRACK IT, IT WOULD TAKE ABOUT 4×10^{22} YEARS.

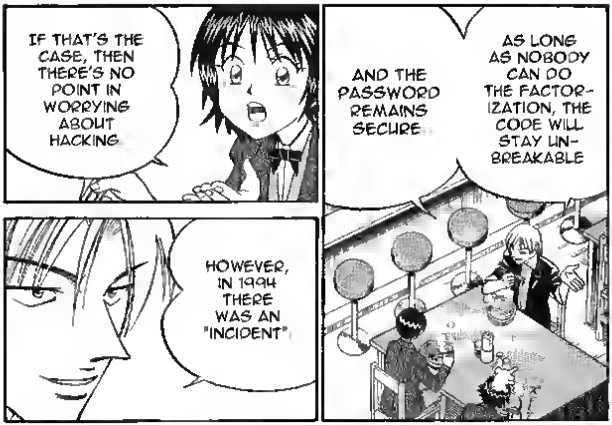
IN THEORY, THIS WAS AN UNBREAK-ABLE CODE

IT WAS A 129 DIGIT CODE THAT WAS CALLED RSA-129.

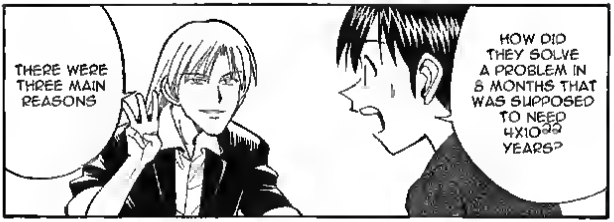
FOR EXAMPLE, IN 1977 THERE WAS A COMPETITION TO FACTOR A VERY LARGE NUMBER

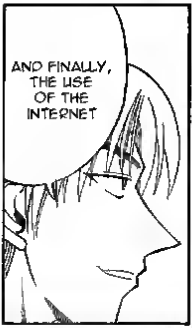


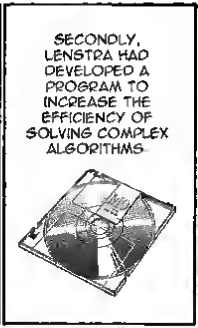
1143 8162 5757 8888
6766 9235 7799 7614
6612 0102 1829 6721
2423 6256 2561 8429
3570 6935 2457 3389
7830 5971 2356 3958
7050 5898 9075 1475
9929 0026 8795 4354
1

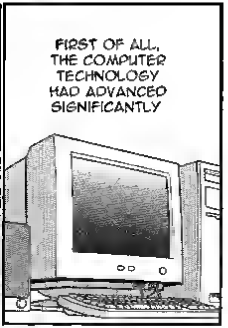

IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN THERE'S NO POINT IN WORRYING ABOUT HACKING
AS LONG AS NOBODY CAN DO THE FACTOR-IZATION, THE CODE WILL STAY UN-BREAKABLE
AND THE PASSWORD REMAINS SECURE
HOWEVER, IN 1994 THERE WAS AN "INCIDENT"

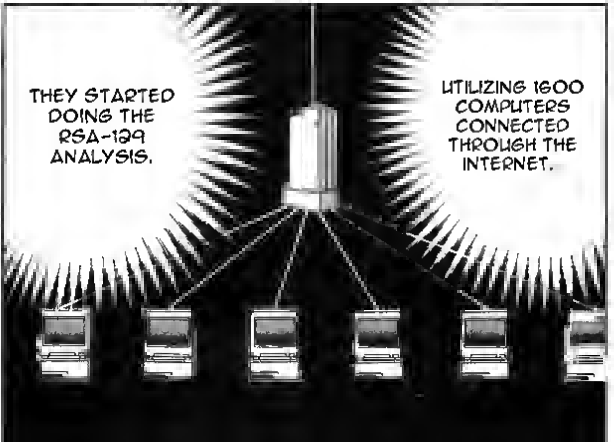
RSA-129 FACTORIZATION, WHICH IN THEORY SHOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO SOLVE
WAS COMPLETED BY A TEAM OF MATHEMATICIANS LED BY ARJEN K. LENSTRA
MOREOVER, THEY SOLVED IT IN JUST 8 MONTHS


THERE WERE THREE MAIN REASONS
HOW DID THEY SOLVE A PROBLEM IN 8 MONTHS THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO NEED $4X10^{22}$ YEARS?


AND FINALLY, THE USE OF THE INTERNET


SECONDLY, LENSTRA HAD DEVELOPED A PROGRAM TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF SOLVING COMPLEX ALGORITHMS


FIRST OF ALL, THE COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY HAD ADVANCED SIGNIFICANTLY

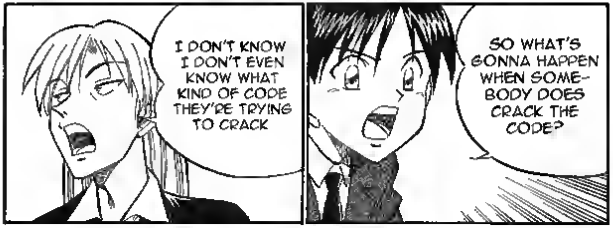

THEY STARTED DOING THE RSA-129 ANALYSIS.
UTILIZING 1600 COMPUTERS CONNECTED THROUGH THE INTERNET.

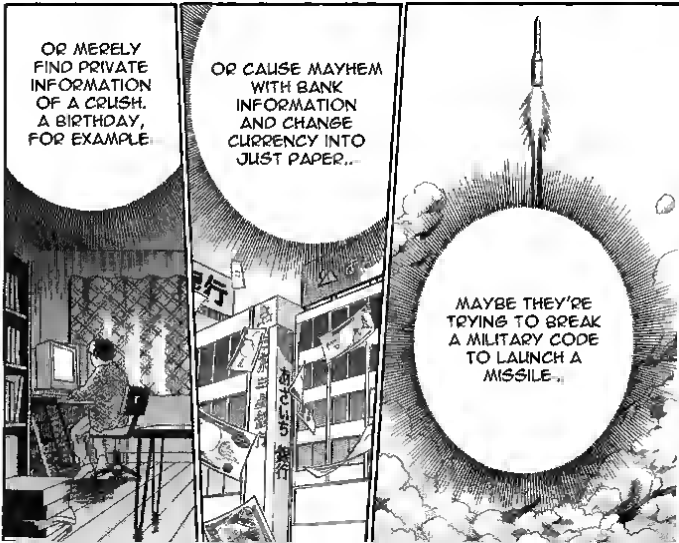
AND RIGHT NOW, SOMEONE IN JAPAN IS TRYING TO DO THE SAME THING.

NOT SURE
BUT WHO? AND FOR WHAT REASON?

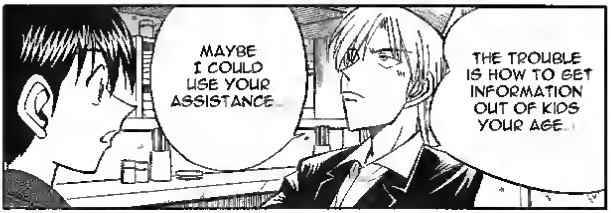
RIGHT NOW, JAPANESE KIDS MEET ONLINE AND PERFORM ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CODE-BREAKING, INVESTIGATE THE TRUTH
HERE'S MY CLIENT'S REQUEST

WE HAVEN'T
THIS RUMOR SPREAD AMONG KIDS. HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING?


I DON'T KNOW I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT KIND OF CODE THEY'RE TRYING TO CRACK
SO WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN WHEN SOMEBODY DOES CRACK THE CODE?


OR MERELY FIND PRIVATE INFORMATION OF A CRUSH. A BIRTHDAY, FOR EXAMPLE.
OR CAUSE MAYHEM WITH BANK INFORMATION AND CHANGE CURRENCY INTO JUST PAPER..
MAYBE THEY'RE TRYING TO BREAK A MILITARY CODE TO LAUNCH A MISSILE..

ANYWAY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.
THAT'S WHY I'M HERE TO INVESTI-GATE IT.

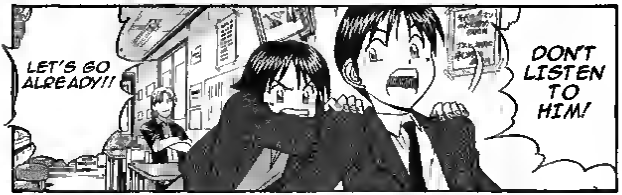

MAYBE I COULD USE YOUR ASSISTANCE.
THE TROUBLE IS HOW TO GET INFORMATION OUT OF KIDS YOUR AGE.

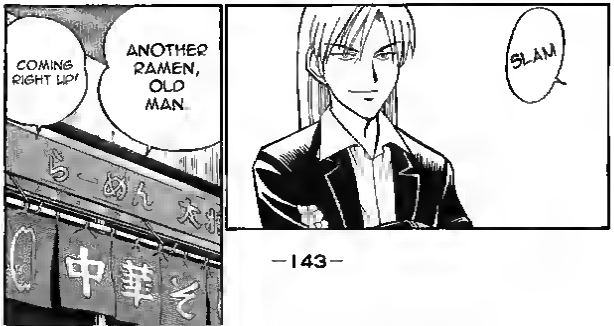
INTERESTED IN HELPING ME WITH THE INVESTIGATION?

HEY, YOH.

WAIT A MINUTE!!
WHAT!?
LET'S GO!
IF YOU DO ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS, I'LL CALL THE POLICE!
YOU'RE GOING TO INVOLVE MIZUNASHI-KUN IN ONE OF YOUR STRANGE CASES, HUH!?
YOH!
DON'T MESS WITH HIM!
ARE YOU AFRAID?

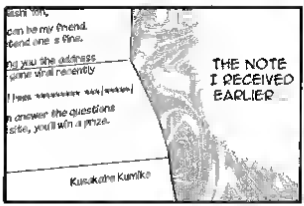
IF YOU HELP ME OUT, I'LL HELP YOU FIGURE OUT YOUR MISSING CHILDHOOD MEMORIES.
MY MEMO-RIES...

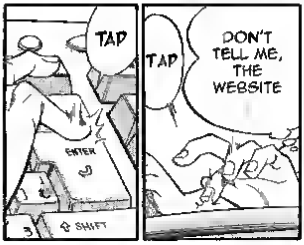

LET'S GO ALREADY!!
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM!


COMING RIGHT UP!
ANOTHER RAMEN, OLD MAN.
SLAM
らーめん 大
中華そ

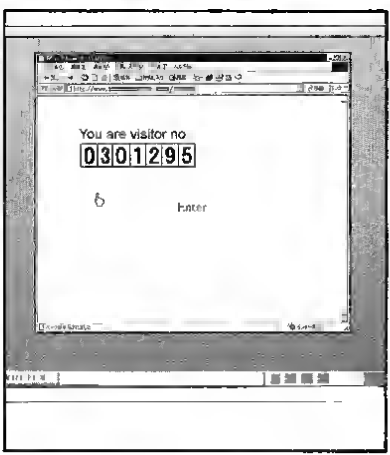
CLICK
MIZUNOSHI GENERAL CLINIC
GENERAL PRACTICE, INTERNAL MEDICINE, ENT,
RESPIRATORY, SUPPORT, NEUROLOGY
OPENING HOURS: 9AM-5PM
SATURDAY, SURGERY,
NATIONAL HOLIDAY: CLOSED
PHEW
THAT GUY ALWAYS BRINGS ME TO A WORLD I NEVER KNEW BEFORE
AFRAID
ARE YOU AFRAID ?

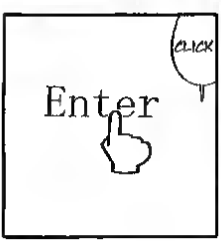
A WORLD WHERE EVERYTHING IS CALM.
ORDINARY STREET...
ORDINARY SCHOOL
AND MY ROOM...
GOOD OR BAD, WHAT WE'RE FACING IS REALITY
.....
THERE'S NO POINT IN ASKING ME...
ON THE INTERNET...
RUMORS CIRCULATING AMONG KIDS YOUR AGE
AH!!

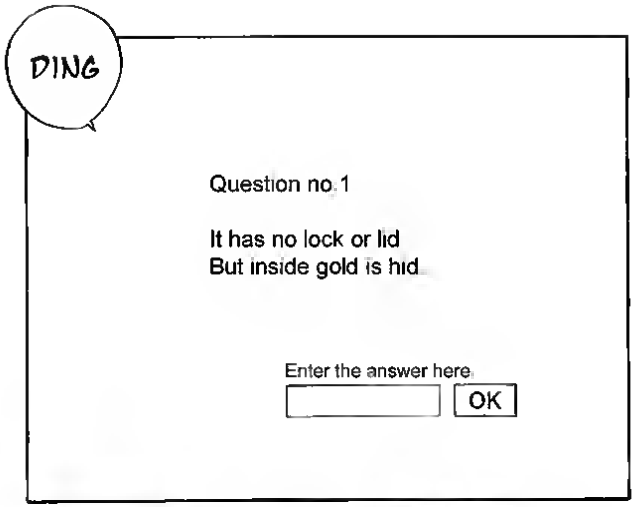

can be my friend.
friend one s time.
ng you the address
ome shall reverently
n answer the questions
ctly, you'll win a prize.
Kusakabe Kumiko
THE NOTE I RECEIVED EARLIER


TAP
ENTER
SHIFT
TAP
DON'T TELL ME, THE WEBSITE

.....

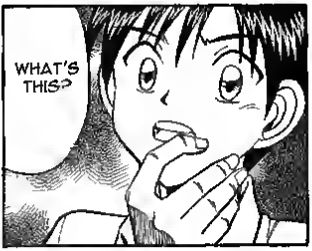

You are visitor no
0301295
Enter


CLICK
Enter


DING
Question no.1
It has no lock or lid
But inside gold is hid
Enter the answer here
OK

HUH?

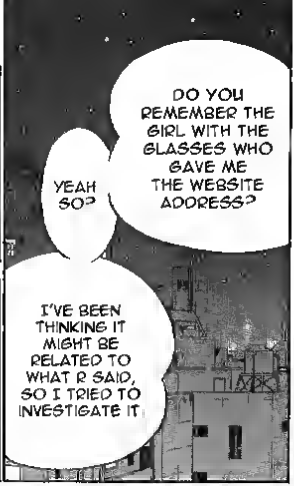
RING
RING


WHAT'S
THIS?

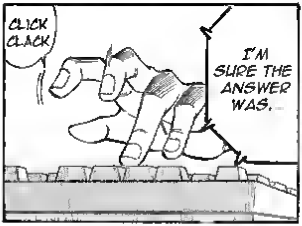
HI, THIS IS MIZUNASHI.
HI, NAGATSUKI HERE.
HUH? WHAT'S UP?
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT WHAT R SAID ABOUT THE CODE-BREAKING..
IDIOT!! WHY DO YOU WANT TO STICK YOUR NOSE INTO THAT?!

I'VE TOLD YOU I THINK IT'S A BAD IDEA!
SO WHY TALK TO ME?
HA HA...
THAT—
IS BECAUSE THERE'S NOBODY ELSE—
トス…
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ASK ME!?

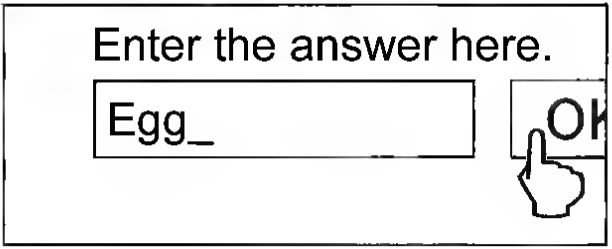
SO WHEN YOU OPEN THE WEBSITE, IT GIVES YOU A STRANGE QUESTION, HUH?


DO YOU REMEMBER THE GIRL WITH THE GLASSES WHO GAVE ME THE WEBSITE ADDRESS?
YEAH SO?
I'VE BEEN THINKING IT MIGHT BE RELATED TO WHAT R SAID, SO I TRIED TO INVESTIGATE IT.

YES.. AND I DON'T GET IT.

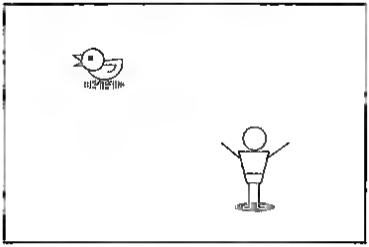

CLICK CLACK
I'M SURE THE ANSWER WAS..

HMM..
I THINK IT WAS ASKED ON A QUIZ..


Enter the answer here.
Egg_
OK

DING

Question no 2 Catch me, who hatched from the egg



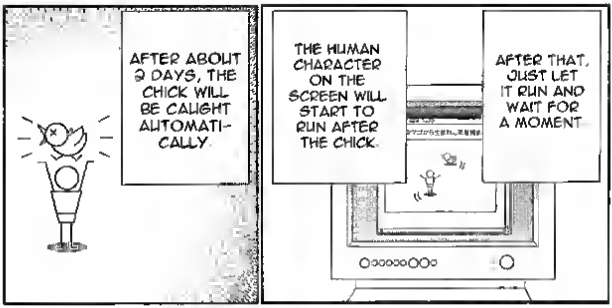
Download

Password

OK

UMM... LET'S SEE...
SO WHAT'S THE QUESTION? TELL ME
WHAT IS THIS?
?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?
IT CAN'T BE DESCRIBED WITH WORDS
GARDENING CLUB GREENHOUSE

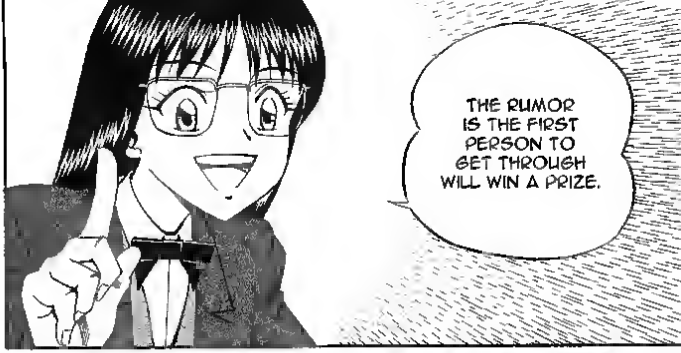
DO YOU HAVE A SECOND?
OH... MIZUNASHI -KUN
OH, THE QUESTION ABOUT CATCHING THE CHICK, HUH?
JUST LET IT BE. YOU'LL CATCH IT EVENTUALLY.
SO THAT'S IT?
AFTER THAT, THE SOFTWARE TO CATCH THE CHICK WILL BE INSTALLED AUTOMATICALLY ON YOUR COMPUTER.
CLICK
Download
FIRST, YOU HAVE TO CLICK THE DOWNLOAD BUTTON ON THE SCREEN

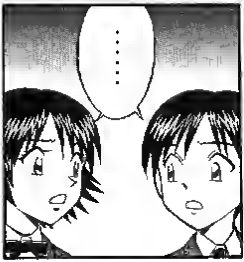

AFTER ABOUT 2 DAYS, THE CHICK WILL BE CAUGHT AUTOMATICALLY.
THE HUMAN CHARACTER ON THE SCREEN WILL START TO RUN AFTER THE CHICK.
AFTER THAT, JUST LET IT RUN AND WAIT FOR A MOMENT.

THE PASSWORD WILL POP UP, AND YOU CAN CONTINUE TO THE NEXT QUESTION.
HUH?

KUSAKABE -SAN, HAVE YOU FINISHED ALL THE QUESTIONS?
WHAT !?
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE PASSWORD IS?
OH ...
NO, I JUST HAPPEN TO KNOW SOMEONE WHO DID AND HE SENT ME THE ANSWER THROUGH THE INTERNET.

THERE ARE A LOT OF STRANGE CREEPS ON THE INTERNET, AND I'VE TRIED TO AVOID THEM AS BEST I COULD.
IT SEEMS THAT YOU'RE PRETTY FAMILIAR WITH THE INTERNET, HUH?
IT'S ONLY BEEN THESE LAST FEW DAYS
NOT REALLY
THE SOLUTION IS ALSO THE SAME AS QUES-TION NO 2.
THE CHICK ON THE SECOND QUESTION HAS GROWN UP INTO A HEN NOW, AND WE HAVE TO CATCH IT.
SO WHAT'S THE THIRD QUESTION ABOUT?
OH, IT'S SIMILAR TO THE SECOND ONE.


THE RUMOR IS THE FIRST PERSON TO GET THROUGH WILL WIN A PRIZE.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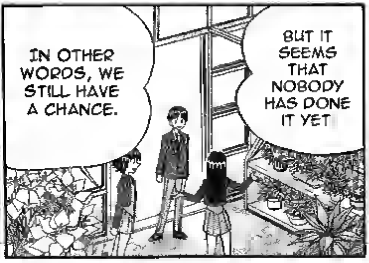
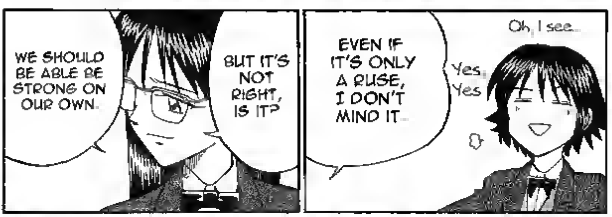

IN OTHER WORDS, WE STILL HAVE A CHANCE.
BUT IT SEEMS THAT NOBODY HAS DONE IT YET

WHY DID YOU GIVE MIZUNASHI -KUN THAT NOTE?
THERE'S ANOTHER THING I'D LIKE TO KNOW—

IT'S BECAUSE A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT MIZUNASHI-KUN THESE DAYS.

OH.. T-THAT..

I'M ALSO BEING BULLIED.
SO I THOUGHT THAT IF I'M FRIENDS WITH MIZUNASHI-KUN THEY WILL STOP BULLYING ME...

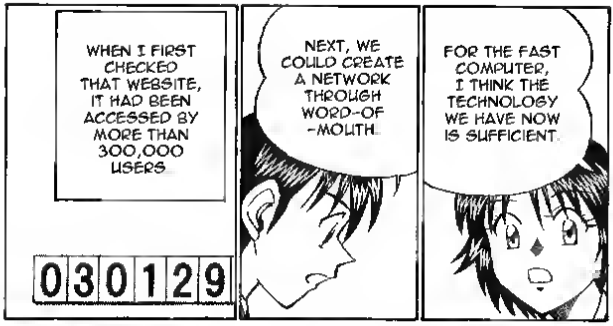

Oh, I see...
Yes, Yes
EVEN IF IT'S ONLY A RUSE, I DON'T MIND IT...
BUT IT'S NOT RIGHT, IS IT?
WE SHOULD BE ABLE BE STRONG ON OUR OWN.

THE PLANTS IN THIS GREENHOUSE ARE VERY VULNERABLE TO THE OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT, AREN'T THEY?

DON'T TELL ME THEY MAKE YOU TAKE CARE OF ALL THESE PLANTS BY YOURSELF?
NO, I DO THIS BECAUSE I LOVE IT...

BECAUSE OF THAT I CAN'T JUST LET THEM BE.
I WANT TO PROTECT THEM.

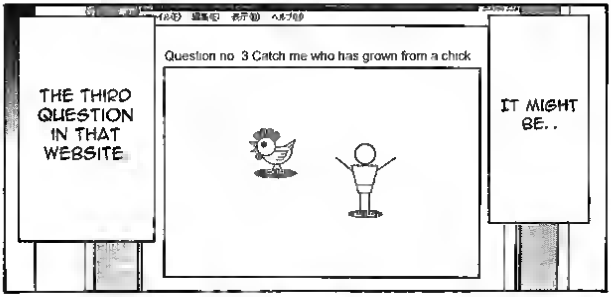
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT STRANGE WEBSITE?
WE JUST HAVE TO GET THE PASSWORDS, RIGHT?
MAYBE
R SAID THAT TO SOLVE AN ALGORITHM, WE NEED THREE THINGS
FIRST, WE NEED FAST COMPUTERS
THEN, A LOT OF COMPUTERS CONNECTED THROUGH A NETWORK
AND A CODE-BREAKING SOFTWARE INSTALLED IN EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM

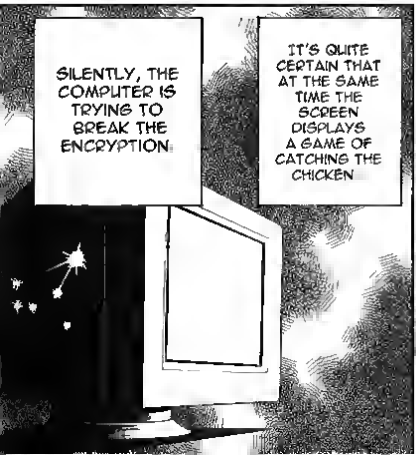

WHEN I FIRST CHECKED THAT WEBSITE, IT HAD BEEN ACCESSED BY MORE THAN 300,000 USERS.
030129
NEXT, WE COULD CREATE A NETWORK THROUGH WORD-OF-MOUTH.
FOR THE FAST COMPUTER, I THINK THE TECHNOLOGY WE HAVE NOW IS SUFFICIENT.

WITH A PROMISE OF A PRIZE, HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL TRY TO WIN IT AND ACCESS THAT WEBSITE?

ARE ALREADY CONNECTED THROUGH THAT WEBSITE.
IT IS LIKELY THAT THESE PEOPLE AROUND US...

AND THEN LASTLY, THE SOFT-WARE TO BREAK THE CODE
WHAT!?


THE THIRD QUESTION IN THAT WEBSITE
Question no 3 Catch me who has grown from a chick
IT MIGHT BE..


SILENTLY, THE COMPUTER IS TRYING TO BREAK THE ENCRYPTION
IT'S QUITE CERTAIN THAT AT THE SAME TIME THE SCREEN DISPLAYS A GAME OF CATCHING THE CHICKEN

!!

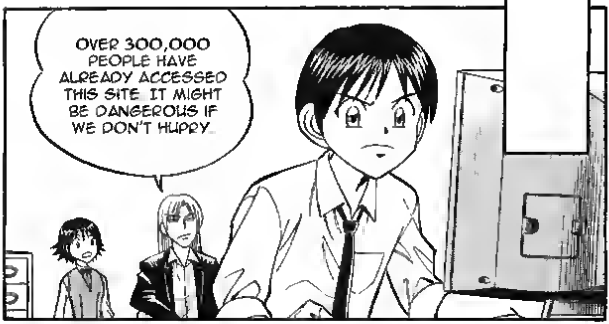
AND THE MOMENT SOMEONE MANAGES TO BREAK THE CODE..
CURRENTLY THERE ARE MORE THAN 300,000 PEOPLE TRYING TO DO THE SAME THING
SOMEONE WILL CATCH THE CHICKEN.
ON ONE OF THE SCREENS ...
I DON'T KNOW.
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT?
MUST BE AFTER SOMETHING.
THE PERSON BEHIND THE SOFTWARE.

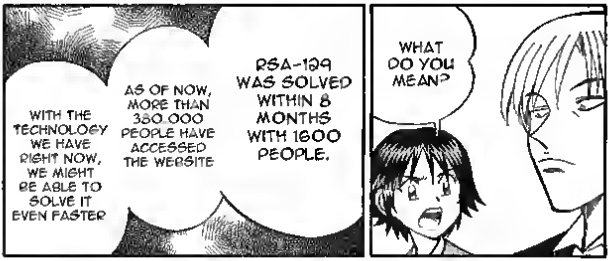
IS THERE GOING TO BE A GIRL WHO'LL GET A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS FOR HER BIRTHDAY...
OR IS THERE GOING TO BE A MISSILE DROPPED ON US IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

WELL ...
SO THIS IS THE WEBSITE YOU'VE DISCOVERED, YOH?
I THINK THIS MIGHT BE THE WEBSITE YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT...
SO YOU'VE FIGURED OUT WHO CREATED THIS WEBSITE?
DON'T SAY THAT YOU ONLY FOUND GOOD-FOR-NOTHING INFORMATION LIKE THIS!
HUH?

AND WHY SHOULD MIZUNASHI-KUN INVESTIGATE THE DETAILS?
IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE YOUR JOB!
HOW WOULD I KNOW THAT?!
ON THE WEBSITE, THERE'S NO INDICATION OF THE CREATOR.
OH, RIGHT! THE SERVICE PROVIDER!!
AND USUALLY, PHONE COMPANIES ALSO HAVE THE CONTRACT TO BE THE INTERNET PROVIDER FOR THE CITY.
Connection to the Rest of the World
Provider
(Connecting Users)
(Same Level Users)
WE HAVE TO SET UP A CONTRACT WITH AN INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER (ISP) TO GET AN INTERNET CONNECTION.

WAIT A MINUTE! HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN TO KEEP ON BEING THE NICE GUY!?
IF WE COULD FIND THE ISP, WE COULD FIND THE IDENTITY OF THE ONE CREATED THIS WEBSITE
SO DO YOU WANT ME TO DO IT?
NO! I'LL DO IT!
NAGATSUKI -SAN, THIS MIGHT BE AFFECTING US TOO!!

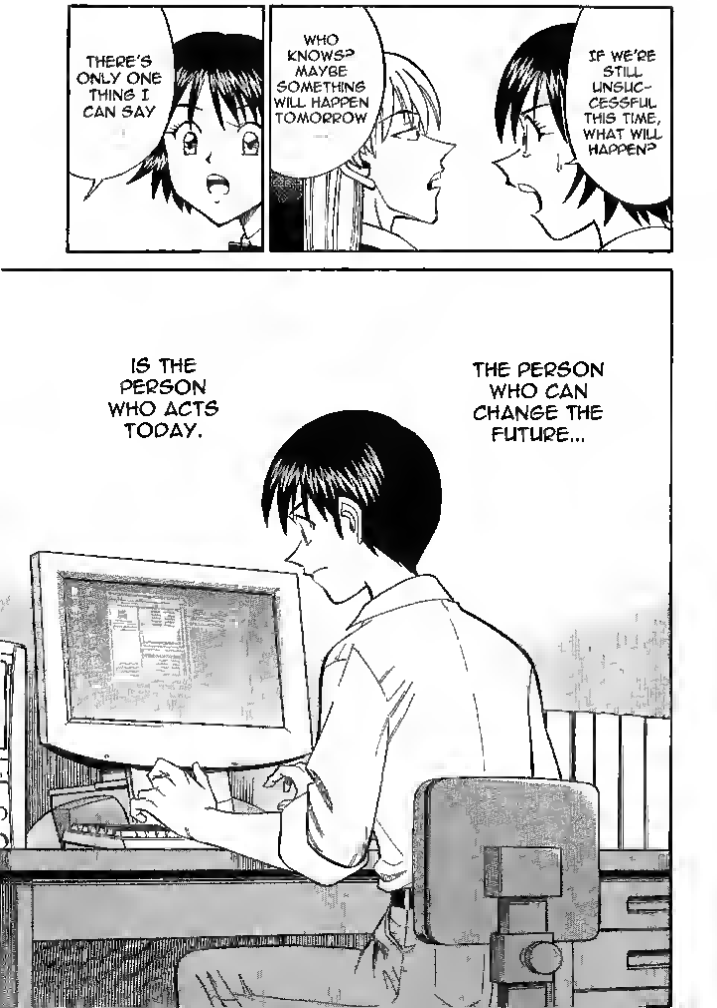

OVER 300,000 PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY ACCESSED THIS SITE. IT MIGHT BE DANGEROUS IF WE DON'T HURRY.

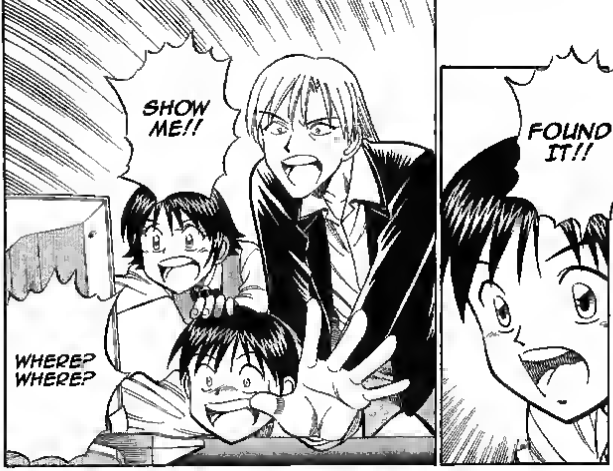

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
RSA-129 WAS SOLVED WITHIN 8 MONTHS WITH 1600 PEOPLE.
AS OF NOW, MORE THAN 350,000 PEOPLE HAVE ACCESSED THE WEBSITE
WITH THE TECHNOLOGY WE HAVE RIGHT NOW, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SOLVE IT EVEN FASTER

IF WE MAKE A MISTAKE IN PREDICTING THE TOTAL USERS, THE NUMBER OF DAYS, AND THE STRENGTH OF THE ENCRYPTION
THE PASS-WORD WILL BE CRACKED SOON, AND WE WILL HAVE A BIG PROBLEM

IT SEEMS TO BE COMPLICATED. SHOULD I GET INVOLVED?
.....
WHAT NOW!?
HUUUH~ THIS IS SO WEIRD!
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN!?
I CAN'T FIND ANY-THING.
THE CREATOR OF THIS WEBSITE
COME ON. THINK THIS THROUGH!
IS NOT CONTRACTED TO ANY PROVIDER.
THINK THIS THROUGH

Here
Provider
OF COURSE!! MAYBE THE CREATOR OF THIS WEBSITE HAS THEIR OWN PROVIDER!!
THAT'S WHY THEY DON'T NEED A CONTRACT!
NO! IT'S THE OPPOSITE!!
YOU NEED TO HELP ME OUT HERE!
BUT HOW CAN WE TRACK THE IDENTITY OF THE CULPRIT?
YOU CAN FIND OUT THEIR IDENTITY BY CHECKING IT!
EVEN IF THEY HAVE THEIR OWN PROVIDER, THEY STILL HAVE TO REGISTER IT.
GOT IT!


THERE'S ONLY ONE THING I CAN SAY
WHO KNOWS? MAYBE SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN TOMORROW
IF WE'RE STILL UNSUCCESSFUL THIS TIME, WHAT WILL HAPPEN?
IS THE PERSON WHO ACTS TODAY.
THE PERSON WHO CAN CHANGE THE FUTURE...


SHOW ME!!
WHERE? WHERE?
FOUND IT!!

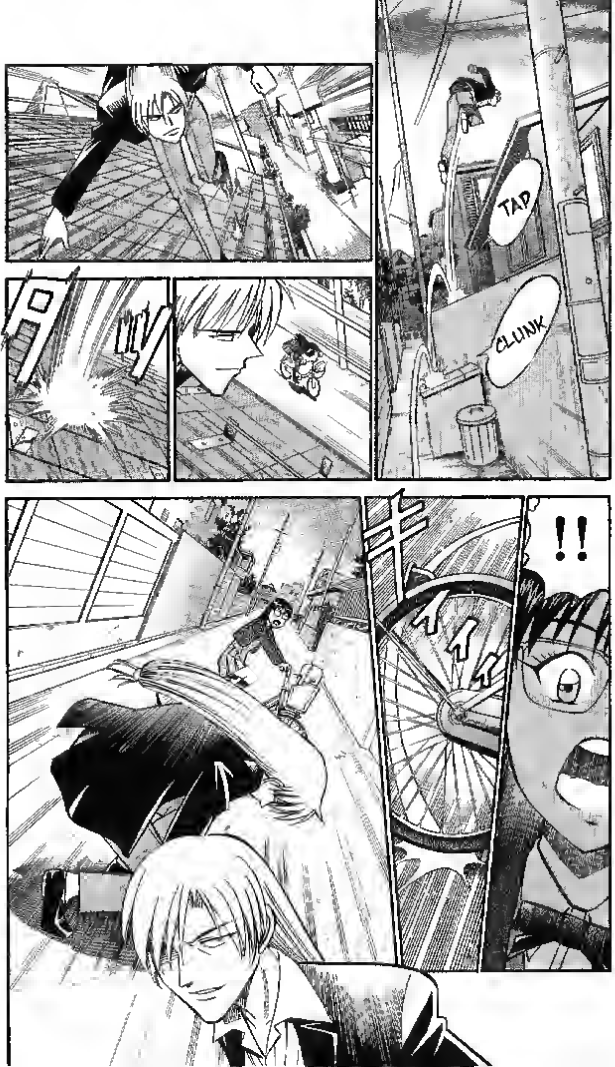
THAT GIRL!!
Kusakabe Kimiko
Tokyo
!!

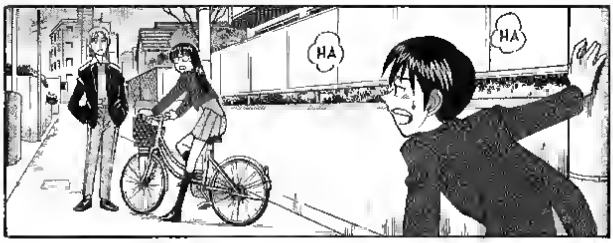
MY INSTINCT IS RIGHT AGAIN!
SEE! I TOLD YOU THERE WAS SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THAT GIRL!

AH!!
クルッ

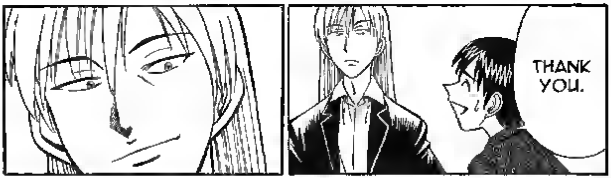
YOU CAN DO THAT, RIGHT?!
R, GET AHEAD OF HER!
AMA-ZING!

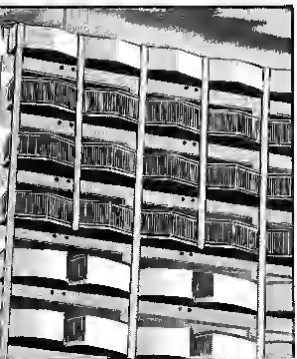
WHA!?
IT'S DANGER-OUS STOP!!
YOU'LL GET HURT!!


TAP
CLUNK
!!

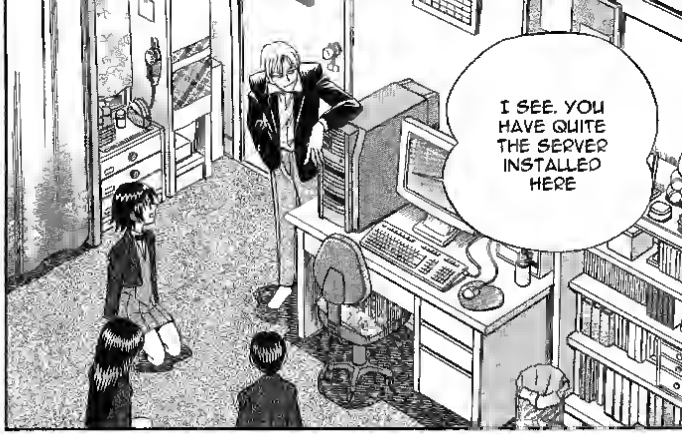

HA
HA

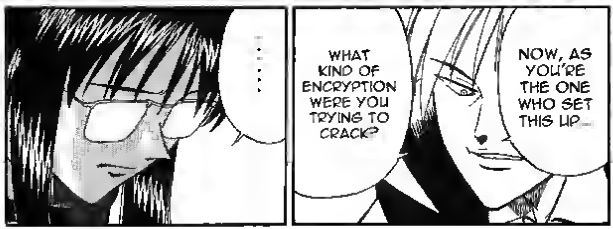
AH... NO.
KUSAKABE -SAN, YOU'RE NOT HURT, ARE YOU?
FINALLY, I'VE CAUGHT UP.


THANK YOU.



YOU'LL COME BACK RIGHT?

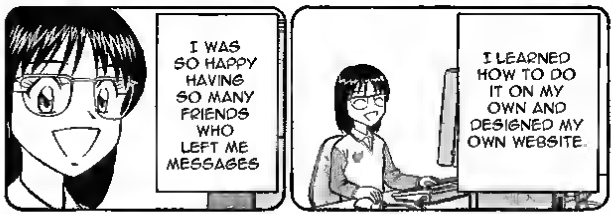

I SEE. YOU HAVE QUITE THE SERVER INSTALLED HERE

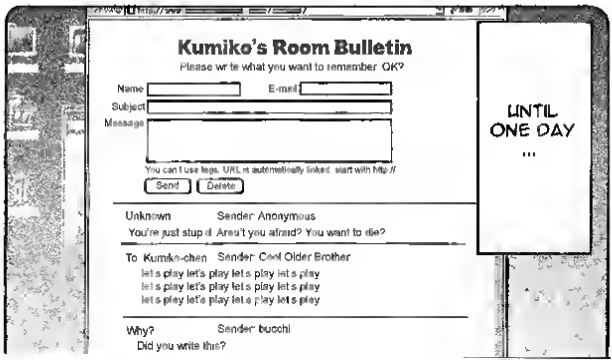

NOW, AS YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SET THIS UP—
WHAT KIND OF ENCRYPTION WERE YOU TRYING TO CRACK?
.....

KUSAKABE-SAN—
R!
SHALL I CRUSH YOU AND YOUR WEBSITE, THEN?

THE ENCRYPTION BEING SOLVED IS MINE.
WHAT ARE YOU... IT'S YOUR OWN CODE THAT OTHERS ARE...?
IT'S NOT PLAYTIME ANY MORE!
LEAVE HER ALONE, R!
PLAYING WITH DECODING ENCRYPTION, MANIPULATING OTHERS...
LOOKING AT THIS, I'M JUST DELIGHTED!
YOU'RE SO BAD

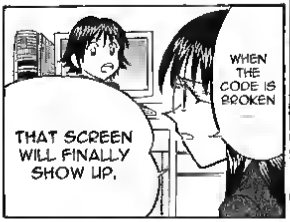
I USED TO...
KUSA-KABE -SAN
HAVE MY OWN WEBSITE.


I WAS SO HAPPY HAVING SO MANY FRIENDS WHO LEFT ME MESSAGES
I LEARNED HOW TO DO IT ON MY OWN AND DESIGNED MY OWN WEBSITE.

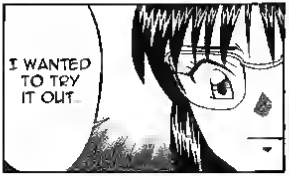

Kumiko's Room Bulletin
Please write what you want to remember OK?
Name
E-mail
Subject
Message
You can't use tags. URLs automatically linked: start with http://
Send
Delete
Unknown
Sender: Anonymous
You're just stup id. Aren't you afraid? You want to die?
To: Kumiko-chan
Sender: Cool Older Brother
let s play let's play let s play let s play
let s play let's play let s play let s play
let s play let's play let s play let s play
Why?
Sender: bucchi
Did you write this?
UNTIL ONE DAY ...

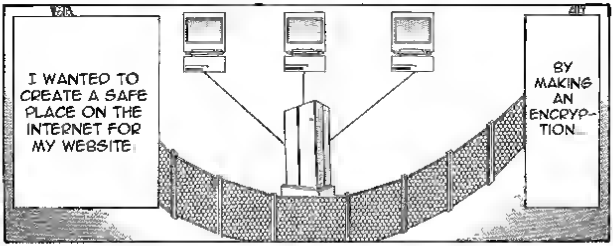
I WAS SO SCARED
Your address
Sender
I can get your IP addres
I know when you're goin
Want me to tell you?
THERE WERE PEOPLE I DIDN'T KNOW...
WHO WROTE STRANGE AND CREEPY THINGS
Email Reply
Sender
Why did you never reply
You're making a fool ou
You're just an elements
THEY HAD ALSO BEEN ATTACKED MANY TIMES
WHEN I TALKED ABOUT IT WITH MY FRIENDS
THERE WERE SO MANY SCARY PEOPLE BOTHERING ME
I DECIDED TO TAKE DOWN MY WEBSITE BECAUSE OF THE SHOCK
OH.
THAT'S WHY I CREATED THAT SERVER

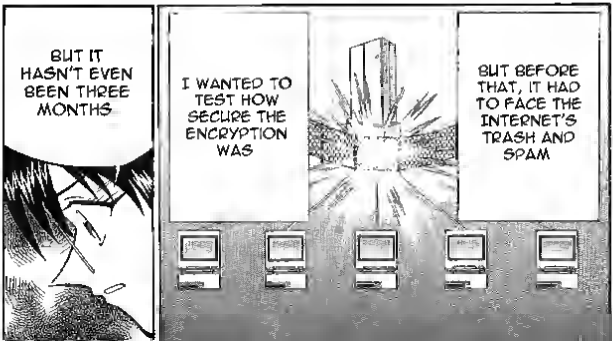
I WANTED TO BE MY OWN PROVIDER TO PROTECT MYSELF AND MY FRIENDS FROM BAD PEOPLE.
SO WHY DID YOU MAKE THAT PUZZLE WEBSITE?
?
IT SEEMS LIKE SOMEBODY MANAGED TO ANSWER THE THIRD QUESTION AND DISCOVERED THE PASSWORD
DING


WHEN THE CODE IS BROKEN
THAT SCREEN WILL FINALLY SHOW UP.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SCREEN?


I WANTED TO TRY IT OUT...


I WANTED TO CREATE A SAFE PLACE ON THE INTERNET FOR MY WEBSITE.
BY MAKING AN ENCRYP-TION...


BUT IT HASN'T EVEN BEEN THREE MONTHS...
I WANTED TO TEST HOW SECURE THE ENCRYPTION WAS
BUT BEFORE THAT, IT HAD TO FACE THE INTERNET'S TRASH AND SPAM

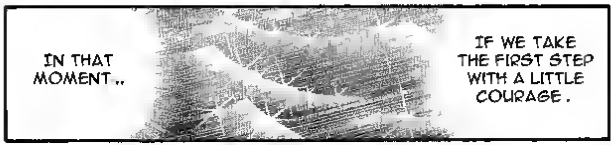
I COULDN'T PROTECT IT.
Welcome to
Kumiko's Room
mail
THE WEBSITE I CREATED BACK THEN.

THIS ...
HUH?

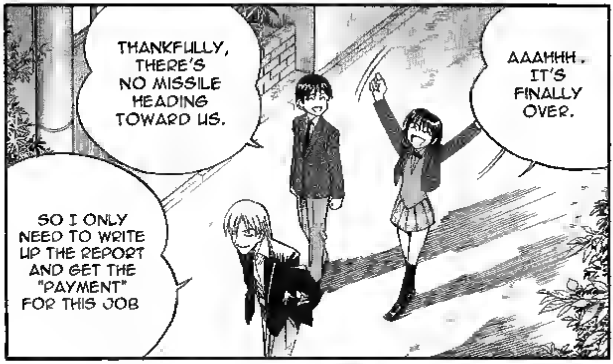
LATELY, YOU'VE BEEN INFLUENCING EVERYONE, SO I THOUGHT THAT IF I TOLD YOU, THE RUMOR WOULD SPREAD...
I'M SORRY I'VE DRAGGED YOU INTO THIS, MIZUNASHI-KUN.
AFTER THIS, THE CODE WILL GET HARDER AND HARDER
BUT IT'S USE-LESS.

SORRY MIZUNASHI -KUN
I'VE FAILED AND I'VE BOTHERED YOU
IF ONLY I WERE STRONGER..
THAT'S NOT THE CASE..
I KNOW THAT YOU REALLY WANT TO PROTECT EVERYONE..
AND YOU TRIED TO DO IT ALL BY YOURSELF...
IT'S NOT A BAD THING..
BUT KUSAKABE -SAN...
WE'RE NOT YOUR GREENHOUSE FLOWERS!

EVEN IF WE FAILED TO PROTECT OR CREATE A SAFE PLACE..
IT DOESN'T MEAN WE'RE WEAK.
BUT EVEN SO...
WE ALL HAVE DOUBTS AND FEARS, ENTERING AN UNFAMILIAR WORLD STRETCHED BEFORE US

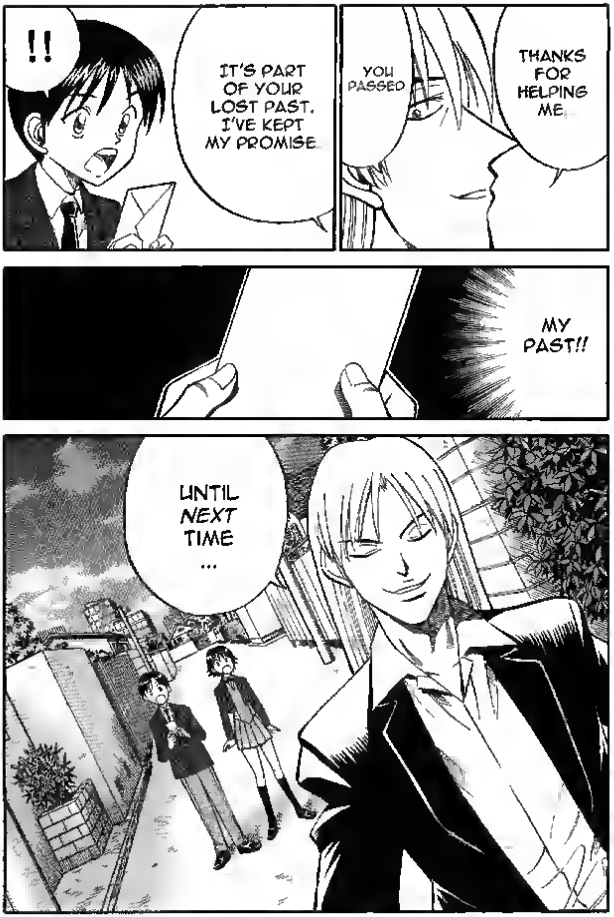

IN THAT MOMENT..
IF WE TAKE THE FIRST STEP WITH A LITTLE COURAGE.

THAT WE'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE...
WE WILL BE ABLE TO ENTER A WORLD...


THANKFULLY, THERE'S NO MISSILE HEADING TOWARD US.
AAAHHH. IT'S FINALLY OVER.
SO I ONLY NEED TO WRITE UP THE REPORT AND GET THE "PAYMENT" FOR THIS JOB

HERE!

THAT'S RIGHT! COME ON, TELL MIZU-NASHI-KUN EVERYTHING!



Age of the Pussyfoot: End

Episode 1
R is for ROCKET——月刊少年マガジン2001年11月号掲載

Episode 2
臆病者の未来——月刊少年マガジン2001年12月号掲載

ROCKETMAN

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Rocket Man

Episode 2:
Age of the Pussyfoot

Translator: Fuschia Bunny
Proofreader/QC: Draiken
Typesetter and Cleaner: argentscarf

The Age of the Pussyfoot, by Frederik Pohl, is about Charles D. Forrester, a firefighter who is revived from cryogenic freezing in the year 2527 A.D. He wakes up to a world very different from what he remembers, with amazing technology and confusing culture. By this time, contact with aliens has also occurred, complicating his new life further.

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